Practical Discourses

Upon Several

Divine Subjects.

Viz.

Of Religious Discourse in Common Conversation.
Of the Fear of Death.
Concerning the Extent of Christ's Satisfaction.
Concerning Practical Atheism.
Of Walking by Faith.
Concerning Charity to the Poor.
Concerning the Right Use of the World.
Concerning the Successive Vanity of Human Life.

An Admonition Concerning Two Late Books, called, *A Discourse of the Love of God.*

VOL. IV.

Written
By *JOHN NORRIS*, M. A. Rector of *Bemerton* near *Sarum.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

To my very Worthy and much Honour'd Friends,

Mrs. *Eliz. Cabel,*

AND

Mrs. *Mary Prowſe.*

GIve me Leave, Good Ladies, *to adorn a Book, (that does not indeed deſerve the Honour of ſuch a Patronage) with the* Inſcription *of thoſe Recommending Names, which near Relation and a very Excelling Worth have Combined to indear to me. I have been hitherto paying my Addreſſes abroad, and now, like one that has been Travelling ſome while in Foreign Parts, find an Inclination to make a Viſit nearer Home, but I do not direct theſe Papers to you ſo much for your Improvement either in Knowledge, or in Life and Practice, as to ſatisfie my own Obligations, and to diſcharge a Debt of Honour and Gratitude. Nor indeed can I hope to make you much* Wiſer, *or much* Better *by any thing that is here offer'd.*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Your eminent and exemplary Practice of your Duty shews that you well understand it, and all that have the Happiness of your Acquaintance Know that you Live *every day better Sermons than I can* Preach. *And I heartily wish we had more such bright Examples of Piety, and living Systems of Morality to give Light and Warmth to a Benighted and Frozen Age, and that the rest of the World were but as well inlightned as that* Sphere *is wherein you move. But you would much rather your Light should shine out from you, than be return'd back to you. I must not therefore* Commend *you, any more than I need* Instruct *you. I pretend indeed to do neither, but only send these Papers by way of Respect and Civility to wait on you; and if you please to receive them, or shall think them worthy to make any part of the Furniture of your Closets, or of the Entertainment of your vacant Hours, the Honour will be equal to the Ambition, and beyond the Deserts of,*

Ladies,

Your Most Affectionate Kinsman, and Most Obliged and Humble Servant,

J. Norris.

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

BEing Willing to be as Serviceable to the Publick as the Measure of my Understanding, Health, Leisure and other Opportunities and Advantages will allow, I continue to Communicate to the World some more of such Practical Discourses as I have Composed upon particular Occasions, and with more than ordinary Care, because I do upon due Consideration verily believe they may (with all their Defects) be in some measure useful, and do good to those who shall Considerately and with Christian Candour peruse them. And if they have that effect, whatever they may be thought of in other respects, I shall not lose my *Aim*, any more than my Reader his *Labour*; for the Success of which I would have him give to God (not to me) the Glory. For I know of none that is due to me, or any other Creature, nor would I therefore assume or pretend to any, but desire to be Content that He in whose Divine Light I see, by whose Grace I am what I am, and by whose Power and Might I do what

I do, ſhould have All. This I take to be the great Rule which all Writers ſhould propoſe to themſelves, and which accordingly I deſire to propoſe in all that I Write: Nor would I own any thing for Mine wherein I either have, or Might be juſtly Suppoſed to have tranſgreſſed it.

I Know not Whether I have met with any thing that has ſtruck me more Senſibly, or made a quicker Impreſſion upon my Spirit than a certain Reflexion which the *Port R.* has upon Our Saviour's Writing upon the Ground, when the Woman taken in Adultery was Accuſed before him. *Jeſus Chriſt* (ſays the Evangelical Moraliſt) 1. *Never wrote but once in his Life.* 2. *And then too but upon the Duſt.* 3. *And only to Evade the Condemning of a Sinner.* 4. *And he would not have what he had Writ to be Known. Thereby inſtructing us not to Write but out of Neceſſity, or for Profit, but with Humility, and Modeſty, and Charity. Jeſus writ his Divine Thoughts upon the Duſt, and we would have Ours ſhould be Written upon Cedar, and Graven upon Braſs. 'Tis indeed moſt Certain that the Spirit of Chriſt is a Spirit of Humility,* and I do not Know whether next to the amazing inſtance of his Incarnation and Humiliation upon the Croſs, he has given a greater Example of it than in not *Writing*. That one who was perſonally united to the Eternal, and Subſtantial *Word* and *Wiſdom* of God, and had the

Abregé de la Morale de L'Evangile. Tom. 2. p. 589.

the Communications of his Divine Spirit without Measure, that Knew so much of the Intellectual World, and could have reveal'd so many Sublime Truths if he had pleas'd, and that without the Labour and Fatigue of Study or Thinking, with as much Ease and Dispatch as 'twas once Say'd, *Let there be Light, and there was Light*; That a Person of such Eminence and Ability should be Content Privately to enjoy the Shine of so Glorious a Day-Spring from on High, and Keep his great and profound Thoughts to himself, without Making any Show or Discovery of his Divine Gifts any further than was absolutely requisite to the Discharge of his Mission, and the Necessary Instruction of the World, and even here too should take the most Natural and unaffected Method, delivering his *Doctrine* as he did his *Miracles* Occasionally and *en Passant*, dropping his Divine Sentences by word of Mouth among those with whom he happen'd to Converse, without the Solemnity of Writing, or the Formality of Set Compositures: I say, the Consideration of this strange *Reserve*, tho' it does not absolutely Condemn Writing Books, yet I think will not have its due Use if not improv'd as a Caution to all Christian Writers how they write for Fame and not for Conscience, and regard any other end but the Glory of God, and the Edification of their Brethren.

As for the latter of these Ends I think there was never more need of Consulting it than now.

py Point the moſt different Parties meet, and whatever their *Faith* may be, their *Lives* for the moſt part are not Chriſtian, nor ſuch as will in the End bring them to Happineſs; unleſs the way thither be much Wider than our Saviour aſſures us it is. Nay, if there be any Truth in that Religion which they profeſs they cannot expect after ſuch Lives any better Portion than a Miſerable Eternity, and yet (which is a ſtrange thing) Happineſs, and that Eternal, is the thing that they propoſe to themſelves all this while, as the great end of their Hopes, and aim of their Endeavours; and if any one that met them upon the *Road* of *Life* ſhould ask them whether they were *travelling*, they would ſay without doubt, for *Heaven*. But can they think that the Common way of Living will ever bring them thither? Strange Folly and Preſumption after a few Days ſo indifferently at leaſt, if not ill Spent upon Earth, to hope hereafter for Heaven! I Know not which is the greater Sottiſhneſs in Men to take ſo little Care for their Salvation, or to think that that little will do.

But how ſhall we awaken Men from this dead Sleep, bring them to themſelves, and recover them into their Senſes? Nothing I Confeſs ſo hard as to reclaim a Vitious and *Knowing* Age. Immorality that proceeds from Ignorance and Darkneſs may like night-walking Shades be Chaſed away by the Light, but who ſhall pull a Mote out of the Eye of the Sun, and if the Light

Light that is in us be Darkneſs, how great, I had almoſt ſay'd how incurable, is that Darkneſs. Frail *Man* whoſe Firſt thoughts are ſo ſhort and confuſed has room and indulgence for Second, but full Light ſeems to exclude Repentance, and no ſooner does an *Angel* Sin but he becomes a Devil. How then can we hope to reform ſuch a Knowing and Rational Age by Reaſon and Diſcourſe! And yet I Conſider again that ſince all ſin is founded in Errour and Wrong Reaſoning of one ſort or other, and implies at leaſt Actual, if not Habitual Ignorance, the Application is ſtill to be made to Men's Reaſon and Underſtanding (as the part primely affected) if not to inform them what they Know not, yet at leaſt to ingage their Reflexion and Conſideration upon what they Know. And this I take to be the great End both of our *Preaching* and of our *Writing*, and if any well diſpoſed Chriſtian ſhall to this purpoſe receive any Advantage from theſe, or any other of my Diſcourſes, I hope he will remember me in his Prayers, and God in his Praiſes and Thanksgivings.

J. N.

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Of

Of Religious Diſcourſe in Common Converſation.

In Three Parts.

PSAL. xxxvij. 30.

The Mouth of the Righteous ſpeaketh Wiſdom, and his Tongue talketh of Judgment.

THIS it ſeems was the Character of a Good Man in King *David*'s time; he was known by his good Diſcourſe; and if it be not ſo now, 'tis either becauſe Mens Thoughts are not ſo good as they were then, or becauſe we are mightily gone off from the Plainneſs and Simplicity of that Age, and are not ſo much diſpoſed to ſpeak what we think. However it be, it may ſeem at firſt ſomewhat ſtrange that when Religion was more in the *Hearts* of Men, at a further diſtance from the Tongue, it ſhould hold ſuch a ſtrict Correſpondence with it, and now 'tis got into the *Head*, and ſo more within its Neighbourhood, it ſhould be yet ſuch a ſtranger to it. But when I think again my Wonder ceaſes. For though the Tongue has its *dwelling* in the *Head*, it has its *Motion* from the *Heart*. And ſo our Saviour tells us, *Mat.* 12. 34. that *out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth ſpeaketh.* But we no where

read that out of the Abundance of the *Head* the Mouth ſpeaketh. Nor do we find it ſo by Experience, but rather the Contrary, Silence being the common Effect of much Knowledge. Let a Man's Head be never ſo full, and it may continue ſo without Aking, but if his Heart be full it muſt Diſcharge it ſelf or break. Thus 'tis not only obſerv'd, but even complain'd of Studious and Contemplative Men, that though their Heads be never ſo plentifully furniſhed with what they read and think, they can yet forbear talking of it, and commonly do ſo, thoſe of them that think and know moſt, being remarkable for ſpeaking leaſt, which makes their Converſation ſo inſignificant and unedifying, as generally it is. But 'tis not ſo with *Lovers*, nor yet with the Men of the World. They are not ſo reſerv'd and lock'd up, but will be continually talking of their ſeveral *Miſtreſſes*, and fancy the Subject as acceptable to others as it is to themſelves, ſo that you may quickly know what they are, and which is their dominant and governing Paſſion by their Diſcourſe. All Love is Talkative, and though the Head can be ſo contentedly Silent, the Heart cannot. When that is full of any thing, even the Dumb cannot forbear ſpeaking, and the Paſſion that looſens their Tongues will alſo make them Eloquent. And becauſe good Men have their Hearts and Minds as much ſet upon Goodneſs, as the Men of the World have theirs upon Worldly and Carnal Objects, ſince the Love of God and of Vertue is their great Paſſion, and Religion the Weight and Bias of their Souls, hence 'tis that the Vein of their Diſcourſe runs altogether upon that ſtrain, and while Vanity and Folly, Sin and Impertinence are the beaten

Subjects

Subjects of Ordinary Converſation, *The Mouth of the Righteous ſpeaketh Wiſdom, and his Tongue talketh of Judgment.*

I need not beſtow any Critical Nicity upon the Words *Wiſdom* and *Judgment*, ſo frequently uſed in Scripture, which takes no notice by way of Commendation of any Wiſdom but what ſerves to the Government of a Man's Life, and the Salvation of his Soul, and which commonly uſes Judgment for Juſtice and Equity, as alſo more at large for the Rules and Precepts of Morality and Good Life in General. And that it ſignifies ſo here, ſufficiently appears from the following part of this Character of a Good Man in the next Verſe, *The Law of his God is in his Heart.* From which put together, the intent of the Pſalmiſt ſeems to be to Characterize a good Man by this Property, that he is one that is wont upon all occaſions to ſeaſon even his Ordinary Converſation with good wholeſome Diſcourſe, ſome Pious and Religious Matter or other, that may ſerve to inlighten and edify thoſe that hear him, and make them the Wiſer and the Better for his Company.

The Subject then that I am led to treat of upon the Occaſion of theſe Words, is, *Of Religious Diſcourſe in Ordinary Converſation:* For the fuller and more diſtinct Conſideration of which my preſent Undertaking ſhall be,

Firſt, To Inquire into the Reaſons, why Diſcourſe about Religion is ſo much diſuſed, even by Good Men, in Common Converſation.

Secondly, To ſhew the Inſufficiency of thoſe Reaſons, and that to ſeaſon his Diſcourſe with the things of Religion is one real part of the Duty of Man.

Thirdly, To ſhew that thoſe who are very good indeed, and have a due thorough Senſe of Religion, will have regard to this Practice, and at leaſt in ſome conſiderable Meaſure, exerciſe themſelves in it. So making good the Character given of them by the Pſalmiſt, *The Mouth of the Righteous ſpeaketh Wiſdom, and his Tongue talketh of Judgment.*

Part I. And Firſt for the Reaſons of the Diſuſe of Religion in Diſcourſe. And here in the Firſt place I take it for granted that I am not going to account for an Imaginary Defect, or Neglect in *Idea* only, but that the Caſe ſuppoſed is Real, that to talk of Religion is indeed very much diſuſed and out of Faſhion, and that among People of laudable Character, and otherwiſe good and vertuous. Not that the Articles, Points, Queſtions and Controverſies of Religion are ſo paſs'd over in ſilence, No, there was always Noiſe and Clamour enough about them, and never more than now, though there be but little Truth gain'd, and a great deal of Charity loſt in the Contention. But 'tis not the Notional, but the Practical part of Religion whoſe diſuſe in Converſation I complain of. Men do indeed talk of Religion, but not of that which is Practical, nor in a Practical way, that is I mean after ſuch a ſerious and devotional Manner as to put one another in remembrance of the great Concernments of a good Life and of that two-fold Eternity which depends upon it, and to ſtir one another up to the Works of Piety and Charity, and the Exerciſe of ſuch Chriſtian Graces as are neceſſary both to carry them to Heaven, and to qualify them for the Enjoyment of it. Do Men talk

talk thus of Religion? No, Wicked Men cannot, and Good Men (unleſs they be very good indeed, whoſe Number, God knows, a few Figures will ſerve to caſt up) for ſome certain Reaſons too often decline it. So that between them both, what through the Indiſpoſition of the One and the Incapacity of the Other, a Man may make Viſit after Viſit, go from Houſe to Houſe, out of one Company into another, for it may be a Twelvemonth together, and never hear one word of Religion paſs, unleſs it be (as was hinted before) by way of Wrangle and Diſpute, and that indeed unleſs he ſtop his Ears, he can hardly avoid, if he can then. But as for any ſerious and edifying Diſcourſe about it, whither ſhall a Man go, unleſs it be to *Church*, to hear any ſuch thing? All the Diſcourſe of the World runs upon the things of the World, ſuch as News, Trade, Buſineſs, Learning, not to ſay any thing of leſſer and meaner Subjects that imploy Goſſiping and Cenſorious Tongues. And theſe things make the great Buz and Hum of the City. But as for Religion there is in all this hurry ſuch an univerſal Huſh and Silence about it, that were it not for our Books of Devotion and our Churches, (thoſe two Providential Monuments and Preſervatives of declining Piety) a Stranger would hardly know whether there were any Religion among us. Sure I am it would be a great while before he would find it by our Diſcourſe; and were he to pick it out by that, for ought I know he might learn our Language much ſooner. It looks in my Mind as if Religion had a kind of *Imbargo* laid upon it, and Men were under a Prohibition to talk of it, and to forfeit ſome Penalty to the Government if they did. Were this the

Caſe, I am Confident they could not be more Silent concerning it than they are, and conſidering the bent of our Inclination to what is forbid, I queſtion whether they would be ſo much!

And yet Men profeſs Religion all this while, expreſs a decent regard towards it, and pretend to believe the weighty Doctrines of it, the Being of God, the Reſurrection of the Body, the Immortality of the Soul, and the two great Eternities. And is it not ſtrange then that they ſhould never talk of theſe things? Should but any two of theſe Men Travel together upon the Road, eſpecially if to a place of conſiderable Note, and which they were never at before, and where they were ever after to dwell, how often would they talk of it before they got to it! Now is not this exactly our Caſe? We are all Travellers, and our Life is but a Journey, and we are bound not for a little Town or City, but for another World, to which we are perfect Strangers at preſent, and in which we are to take up our happy or miſerable abode for ever. And is it not then very ſtrange that Men ſhould Travel on together day after day for many Years following, upon a Journey of ſuch Conſequence as this, and never entertain themſelves upon the Road with what all other Travellers do, diſcourſe about their Journeys End, and the right way that leads to it. That a thing that is ſo much every Body's Concern, ſhould be almoſt no Body's Diſcourſe. Is not this a Wonder? yes it is, the very greateſt that I know of in the World. But then this makes it the more neceſſary to conſider the Reaſons of ſo ſtrange a Conduct.

And here I think in the Firſt place 'tis very plain and obvious why Wicked Men talk no more of Religion, even becauſe they have none to talk of. The reaſon why there is ſo little of it in their Mouths, is becauſe there is leſs of it in their Hearts. When there are ſo many other Subjects that are more agreeable to their Taſtes, they have no Heart to talk of a thing they have neither Notion nor Reliſh of themſelves, and which would but lull their jolly Company aſleep. And truly 'tis no great matter whether they do or no, ſince they muſt needs do it with a very ill Grace, and to very little purpoſe. Religion has no advantage from the Commendations of thoſe whoſe Lives are a conſtant Satyr upon it, and they do it diſhonour enough by their bare Profeſſion of it, and therefore need not add to that the further diſgrace of their Diſcourſe. And unleſs they owe it a Spite, and have a mind either to Affront that or their Company, ſure they will not. For certainly the Religious Diſcourſe of him cannot be very decent to Men, whoſe *Religion* it ſelf, whoſe very *Prayer* is an Abomination to God, and if a Parable, as *Solomon* ſays, *Prov.* 26. 7. be not comely in the Mouth of a Fool, much leſs is Religion in the Mouth of an ill Man. But I think we may excuſe them here, it being a fault they are very rarely guilty of, unleſs it be upon two particular Occaſions, when they are either *Drunk* or about to *Dye*, and then indeed you ſhall have ſome of them very Devoutly given, and much for talking of Religion, but at other times they ſtudiouſly baulk and decline it as too flat a Subject for their gay Spirits.

But 'tis not worth while to conſider any longer what theſe Men do, or upon what Grounds and

Motives they act. It is of more Conſequence to inquire into the Grounds and Reaſons of the great diſuſe of Religious Diſcourſe among Good Men. And here though I doubt not but that this is in great Meaſure to be aſcribed to want of Goodneſs too as well as in the other ſort, or which is all one to the imperfection of it, ſince, as will be made appear under the Third Part, thoſe who have a due Senſe of Religion, and a thorough Zeal for it, will ſhew it by their Diſcourſe, yet becauſe the Men I am now ſpeaking of, though not the very Beſt, are yet ſuppoſed to be Good, and ſo muſt have a true Love and value for Religion, and conſequently muſt be ſuppoſed willing enough of themſelves to talk of it, were there not ſome Diſcouragements from without that did hinder them from ſo doing, I think it more Material at preſent to Conſider what thoſe unhappy Diſcouragements are. The moſt ordinary and moſt prevailing of which I take to be theſe Three.

1. *The Contempt that is generally caſt upon Good Men.*
2. *The Fear of being thought Hypocrites.*
3. *Shame of being out of the Mode or Faſhion.*

1. *The Contempt that is generally caſt upon Good Men.* Not that I think an ill Man can poſſibly deſpiſe a good Man in his Heart. No, he has a ſecret Eſteem and Veneration for him there, and as he would willingly dye the Death, ſo he inwardly Honours the Life of the Righteous. But yet for all this Wicked Men have ſtill ſo much of their Father the Devil in them, that they are loath to be unhappy alone, and take a Solitary Journey to Hell, and

and are therefore for ſecuring as much Company thither beforehand as they can. And in order to this they endeavour to fix a Mark of Ignominy and Diſgrace upon Religion, and treat thoſe that openly profeſs and practice it with Scorn and Contempt, thinking by their ridiculing Scoffs and Flouts either to Laugh them out of it, or at leaſt to Diſcourage them from ſuch an open Acknowledgment, and viſible expreſſion of it as ſhall do them or their Helliſh Cauſe any hurt. Their Plot is againſt the very Being and Life of Religion, and if by this means they cannot extinguiſh its Vital Heat, yet they hope at leaſt to ſtifle its Light, and hinder it from *Shining*. So that if Men will be good and vertuous they ſhall be ſo to themſelves, and make no ſhew of their Piety to ſhame and upbraid thoſe that have none, or to confirm thoſe that have. This is their Deviliſh Policy, and with the Devil's help they too often ſucceed in it, having beſides that Advantage a very ſtrong Paſſion in Human Nature on their ſide. For there is nothing that Men more naturally love than Eſteem, and nothing that they more naturally hate, and can leſs bear than Contempt. And ſince this Contempt is thus maliciouſly intail'd upon Goodneſs, this makes Good Men backward to Diſcourſe of Religion for fear they ſhould meet with it, and ſo with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 39. they hold their Mouth as it were with a Bridle, while the ungodly are in their ſight, and keep ſilence, yea, even from good Words, though it be Pain and Grief to them. For 'tis againſt the natural Grain and Diſpoſition of their Minds, but they are afraid to appear what they are becauſe of the Contempt that is annex'd to their Character, and therefore they chuſe (though

with

with inward reluctance) to hide their Goodneſs, and wear a Diſguiſe over it, as ſome whoſe Profeſſion obliges them to another ſort of Habit, are ſaid to travel ſometimes in grey coats for fear of meeting with Affronts upon the Road. Why this is the very caſe of Good Men in the World. They dare not appear in their true colours. But then by the way, is not the World come to a fine paſs think ye, when Religion has ſo few Friends in it, that the Servants of Jeſus Chriſt are afraid to wear their Maſter's Livery, leſt it ſhould expoſe them to Affronts? But I forbear, and go on to the next Diſcouragement, which is,

2. *The Fear of being thought Hypocrites.* Hypocriſy is ſo odious a Vice that even the very Suſpition of it is intolerable, and the Better any Man is the more uneaſy and inſupportable it muſt be to him. As there can be nothing ſo fundamentally contrary to the Nature and Character of a good Man, ſo there is nothing ſo deeply reſented, or juſtly dreaded by him, to whom it muſt be a far leſs Affliction to be thought altogether without Religion, than to be thought a Pretender to it when he has none. Now here's another Artifice of Wicked Men againſt the Good and Pious. If they fail in their firſt Deſign, and cannot directly Ridicule them out of their Religion, nor render them ridiculous for it, then they turn the Tables, and cry them down for *Hypocrites* and Diſſemblers, and then they reckon they undermine the beautiful Fabrick of their Vertues at one blow, and make them contemptible and odious all at once. And becauſe this is ſo effectual an Engin, you ſhall often find them at work with it. When they ſee a Man carry any extraordinary Appearances, or expreſs

any

any uncommon Symptoms of Religion (and as the World goes, ordinary ones are now become ſuch) either in his Actions, or in his Deportment, or in his Diſcourſe, the next word is, *I'll warrant you he is a Hypocrite*, and then they reckon they have done his work, and their own too. Now though this be a moſt extravagant and unconſcionable way of cenſuring, to ſet Men down for Hypocrites becauſe they wear about them the Marks and Characters of Religion, yet I muſt needs confeſs that a certain ſort of Men in the World have unhappily contributed too much Occaſion to it, and Pretence for it, partly by their talking of Religion after ſuch a Canting, Whining, Awkward and Fantaſtical Manner, ſo as to betray the want of it at the ſame time; and partly by acting againſt it while in their Diſcourſe they ſeem'd ſo paſſionately zealous and concern'd for it, by being found wanting in the great Duties of Morality, and particularly to make bold with the Precepts of the *Second Table*, while they overflow'd with Religious Sentences, dropt Scripture as they went, and had nothing but *God*, *Chriſt*, and *Heaven* in their Mouths. This Awkward and Nauſeous way of talking of Religion was enough of it ſelf to make men ſick of it. But then the groſs Immorality that uſually went along with it, did ſo further prejudice and poſſeſs them againſt it, that whenever they heard Men begin any Diſcourſe about Religion, they thought preſently there was ſome Diſhoneſty a hatching, and that 'twas time to look to their Pockets. By this Means good Communication was brought into diſcredit, the Palate of the World was diſguſted at it, ſome were jealous of it, others afraid of it, and all conceiv'd a Prejudice and an

Averſion

Averſion againſt it, ſo that the Holy Things of Religion fell at length into Contempt and Diſrepute, nay, became an Abomination and an Offence, inſomuch that (as 'tis ſaid upon the Occaſion of the Miſcarriages of *Eli*'s Sons) *Men abhorr'd the Offerings of the Lord*, 1 Sam. 2. 17. And as the Text moreover ſays, that the Sin of the young Men was great, ſo I doubt not but that the Men I ſpeak of have a great deal to anſwer for the Prejudice they have done to the Intereſt of Religion, the general diſreliſh and diſtaſte they have rais'd in Mens minds againſt it, the ſcandal they have laid in the way of good Men, and the Advantage they have given to the bad, who have not fail'd to make the utmoſt uſe and improvement of it. For I cannot but look upon this as the chief Cauſe of the great Diſuſe of Religious Diſcourſe, of which even good Men are grown ſhy, aſham'd, nay even afraid, leſt they ſhould be thought guilty of that Hypocriſy which ſome of our late Pretenders were ſo notorious, and ſo infamous for. The ſhort is, Men were got into a very odd and untoward way of talking of Religion, and ſome of the greateſt Talkers of it were withal obſerv'd to be ſome of the greateſt Knaves, and to make uſe of their Sanctify'd Diſcourſe only as a Diſguiſe to Palliate, and as an Inſtrument to Execute their Knavery, and this made honeſt and well-meaning Men avoid it, for fear they ſhould be taken for Knaves and Hypocrites too. And the ſame Conſideration has too great an Influence upon them ſtill, and 'tis a Prejudice they cannot yet get over. But there is another conſiderable Objection behind, and that is,

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3. *The Shame of being out of the Mode and Faſhion of the World.* This Reaſon I put laſt, becauſe it ſuppoſes Religious Diſcourſe to be already in diſuſe for the ſake of the two former, and does not firſt make it ſo, but only adds more Weight to the already prevailing Scale. The Contempt that lies upon Good Men, and the Fear of being taken for Hypocrites firſt jointly conſpire to bring Religious Diſcourſe out of Faſhion; and when it is ſo, then the ſhame of being out of that Faſhion contributes to the further forbearance and diſuſe of it. The Mode and Cuſtom of the World is one of the moſt ingaging and bewitching things in it; one of the firſt that Fools learn, and one of the laſt that Wiſe Men can find the Courage to deſpiſe. 'Tis ſo in all things, but in nothing ſo much as in Diſcourſe, whoſe conformity to Cuſtom is reckon'd its greateſt Elegance and Commendation, as well in the Choice of the Subject as in the uſe of Words and Phraſes. Men uſually talk, not only according to the Tone and Dialect of their ſeveral Countries, but upon thoſe Subjects too that are moſt faſhionable and creditable there. For you muſt know that there are certain Modiſh Subjects as well as Modiſh Expreſſions and ways of Talking, and thoſe different according to the diverſity of Ages, Places, and Perſons. The Courtiers Subject is Love and Gallantry, the Gentleman talks of his Country-Sports and Recreations, the Trades-man of Buſineſs and Six to the Hundred, the Scholar a little indeed more to the purpoſe of Books and Learning; but none of theſe talk of *Religion*; that's a ſtale, out-dated, antiquated, ſuperannuated Subject, too dull and melancholy for the Gaiety of this ſpruce and more accompliſh'd

accompliſh'd Age, and a Man were as good be ſeen in an Antick Dreſs, or with a Ruff about his Neck, as to have it in his Mouth. And accordingly thoſe that have it in their Hearts are apt to be very wary and cautious how they let it appear *there*. They ſee that the Humour of the World runs againſt them, that there are ſo many more pleaſing and agreeable Subjects to talk of, that Religion can find no place, and is in a manner ſhut out of all Converſation, that the Great and the Wiſe, the Well-bred and the Learned, and even the Good too, very gravely paſs it over, and they are loth to be ſingular, and know not how indeed to begin an unwelcom Diſcourſe upon an unmodiſh Subject, and which, if they ſhould, no body would ſecond them in, or thank them for; or perhaps ſo much as give them a patient Hearing; and ſo partly out of caution and prudent regard to themſelves, and partly out of good Breeding and Reſpect to their Company, they very mannerly and civilly let it alone. And by this means it comes to paſs that other Channels are cut out for our Diſcourſe, which runs upon all the Subjects in the World beſides, whether great or little, good or bad, ſo that nothing can eſcape the reach and compaſs of our Talk, while in the mean time Religion, which is the Glory of our Natures, the End of our Beings, the Nobleſt Object of our Thoughts, the greateſt Concernment of our Lives, and the beſt Imployment of our Tongues, is yet confined to the Cloſet, and dares not appear abroad, or breathe in the open Air, but like a Lamp in an Urn is forced to burn under Ground, and to ſhine within its little Subterraneous incloſure, where none can ſee or enjoy its Light. The World in ſhort is

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come to this, that that Freedom, Openneſs and Ingenuity that belongs to Religion and Vertue, is uſurp'd by Vice and Wickedneſs, and that Guilt, Shame and Reſervedneſs, which is proper and due only to Vice, is by a ſtrange Combination and Agreement impoſed upon Religion; ſo that as excellent a thing as it is, even thoſe that have it are aſhamed to own it, but every Man keeps it as a *Fairy-Treaſure* to himſelf, as if he were to loſe either *that* or his *Credit* by the Diſcovery. And thus have I laid before you the Principal Reaſons of the great diſuſe of Religion in our Common Diſcourſe. And leſt they ſhould be thought to juſtify that unhappy Effect which they ſo ordinarily produce, I come now in the next place,

Secondly, To ſhew the Inſufficiency of theſe Reaſons, and that to ſeaſon his Diſcourſe with the things of Religion is one real part of the Duty of Man. And firſt as to the *Contempt* that ſo uſually waits upon Goodneſs, what is there in it that ſhould ſo much as move a Perſon of Senſe and Diſcretion (which I ſuppoſe every Good Man in ſome meaſure to be) when he conſiders that 'tis only *Contempt*, that is, only an Opinion, which being a Thought of the Mind may indeed expreſs it ſelf in Words, Looks, and Supercilious Behaviour, but can neither wound the Fleſh, nor break the Bones, nor make the Object of it any further unhappy than he pleaſes. For when all's done, 'tis not another's Thought concerning a Man, but his own that muſt afflict him, and make him uneaſy, and if he can but maſter his own Reflection, he may at once defy and deſpiſe the others Opinion. As he may eaſily do if he Part. II.

he conſider further that 'tis not only mere Contempt, but the Contempt of an ill Man, who for the ſame reaſon to be ſure is ſo ill a Judge that his good Character would be the trueſt Scandal, and if he thought never ſo Honourably of a deſerving Perſon, it would be that Perſon's Intereſt to bribe him to keep his Opinion to himſelf. But then again, 'tis not only bare Contempt, and that of an ill Man, but an ill Man's Contempt of one that is good, and therefore Worthy of the higheſt Honour and Eſteem, and that for doing what belongs to him as ſuch, for acting according to his excellent Nature and Character. 'Tis as if one ſhould deſpiſe *Light* for *Shining*. And can there be any thing more contemptible, as well as abſurd, than ſuch a Contempt, unleſs it be the Author of it? All this I ſpeak upon Suppoſition that an ill Man could poſſibly deſpiſe one whom he thinks truly good: But what if he cannot? What if all this Contempt (as was remarqu'd before) be nothing but in ſhew and external Treatment, nothing but a forc'd acting of an uncivil part, while at the ſame time he ſecretly Honours and Reverences him within himſelf? What a poor deſpicable thing muſt this empty Shadow of Diſreſpect then appear, how unworthy, I will not ſay of a Good Man's Concern, but even of his very Notice and Conſideration!

Then in the next place as to the Fear of being thought a *Hypocrite*, I will readily allow it to be as bad a Thought as one Man can poſſibly entertain of another (which by the way ſhould make Men tender and cautious how they proceed to ſo ſevere a Cenſure) but then 'tis no more than a *Thought*, and that commonly of the more raſh and haſty as well

well as diſaffected Judges, and in the preſent Caſe a very unjuſt one, there being no rational ground why any Man ſhould be thought guilty of Hypocriſy for talking Religiouſly, unleſs he betray it himſelf, either by the Affected and Fantaſtick manner of his Diſcourſe, or by the viſible Demonſtration of a contrary Life. Religious talking abſolutely conſider'd and in it ſelf, is no Natural ſign of Hypocriſie, but of the contrary, for who ſhould talk of Religion but thoſe that have a deep Senſe of it, and are animated with its Power and Spirit? There is, I know, a way of Talking, or rather, *Prating* of Religion, which may juſtly expoſe a Man to that Suſpicion, but truly if a Man Diſcourſe of it ſeriouſly, gravely, ſoberly and unaffectedly, and does not appear to bely his Diſcourſe by his Practice, whatever Wicked and Envious Men may out of Malice or Policy give out, I can hardly believe that they who call him Hypocrite with their Mouths, do in their Hearts really think him ſo. But whether they do or no, what great matter is it, and what need a Good Man be ſo much concern'd to be thought or cenſur'd as a Hypocrite by a Company of Fallible Creatures at beſt, and for the moſt part Fools and Sots, when he is Conſcious to himſelf of his own Sincerity, and can with Boldneſs Appeal to the great Infallible Judge for the Truth and Integrity of his Heart.

Then Laſtly, As to the *Shame* of being out of the *Mode* and Faſhion, this one would think ſhould be even to an ordinary Meaſure of Wiſdom and Goodneſs, a very Vincible and Surpaſſable Diſcouragement. For alas what is a Mode or Faſhion, but only a continued and ſettled Practice of a great Many? A Mode implies only Matter of *Fact*, not

of *Reaſon* or *Right*. 'Tis not what a great many ſhould do, but what they do do, and for ſome conſiderable time continue to do. For there are two things that go to the making of a Mode or Faſhion, the Practice of a great Many, and the continuation and ſettlement of that Practice. The Practice of a Few does not make a Faſhion, nor of a great Many if it have not ſome Continuance. But now that a thing be done for a long time, or by a great many (beſides that thoſe *Many*, though the Major, are generally the leaſt conſiderable part of Mankind) is ſo Caſual and Fortuitous a thing, and that depends upon ſo many little Accidents and Contingencies, not to ſay Whimſeys and Caprices, that the World had need be much another thing than it is to deſerve that a Wiſe Man ſhould pay any great deference to any of its Faſhions. Indeed did Men always act conſiderately and upon Principles of Senſe and Reaſon, nay, even according to the beſt of that Underſtanding which they have, the Caſe would be very different, but as they are pleas'd now to order the Matter, that which we call the Faſhion of the World, is little better than the Humour of the World, and what great regard is there due to that? Something indeed there is in it, ſo much, that a Man would not willingly be out of the Mode when he might be as well in it, but would Comply with it as far as he might innocently and reaſonably, and not be Singular for Nothing. But yet after all, a Mode that has no Natural Reaſon or Ground, but only mere Cuſtom and Uſe to Support it, is but a very little thing. And what then is an ill Mode, a Mode that is againſt all Senſe and Reaſon and Religion too, and that tends to the Diſcouragement and Suppreſſion, I may ſay Extinction

tinction of that little Piety that is left among us? And what Reaſon is there that a good Man (one of whoſe principal Characters is, *Not to be Conform'd to the Courſe of the* World) ſhould decline diſcourſing of the only Subjects that's worth talking of, for fear of tranſgreſſing ſuch a Mode? But the Miſchief of it is, Fools begin Faſhions, and Wiſe Men not only Follow, but Authorize them.

And thus you ſee how ſlight and trivial theſe Mighty Objections are when they come to be look'd into, which diſcourage ſo many Good Men from talking of Religion, and withal, by the way, what little things will hinder us from doing that which is Good. But ſuppoſe they were never ſo conſiderable otherwiſe and in themſelves, yet what are they, and how little ought they to be regarded, when they come in Competition with a Man's *Duty*! I ſay a Man's *Duty*, for ſo I call it, and ſhall now prove it to be from the Three great Heads of the Duty of every Man, that to Himſelf, that to his Neighbour, and that to God.

And Firſt 'tis a Duty that every Man owes to *Himſelf*. The great and general Duty that every Man owes to himſelf is to Conſult the Perfection of his Rational Nature, and to provide for the Eternal Happineſs of his Soul. And the next to that is to uſe all thoſe Means which directly lead to that End, and have a near Connexion with it. Now as a Holy and Religious Frame and Temper of Mind is the neareſt and moſt immediate Means to that, ſo there is nothing that does more Naturally conduce to cheriſh and keep up in a Man a Warm and Vital Senſe of Religion, than frequently to talk of it. Meditation upon good things is in-

deed of excellent uſe to this purpoſe, and accordingly the Pſalmiſt makes it one Part of the Good Man's Character, *Pſal.* 1. that he *Meditates in the Law of God day and night.* And ſo in the Verſe after the Text it is ſaid of him, that *the Law of his God is in his Heart.* But yet however, Religious Thoughts when they are confined to the Mind, and tranſacted only in the Scene of the Imagination, have not half that Influence upon the Man, as when they are cloath'd with Words, and are audibly uttered by the Tongue. Meditation is a great Improvement to a *Scholar*, but yet to Diſcourſe over, and Communicate his Notions to another, ſerves yet further to improve him, and lets in New and More Light into his Thoughts. And ſo 'tis in Religion, to Think and Meditate of it ſilently to ones ſelf, is, no doubt, a very Comfortable and Edifying Practice, but yet when we talk of it to another, it makes a deeper Impreſſion upon us, and we are quite otherwiſe affected with it than when we muſed upon it privately by our ſelves alone. And indeed let a Man retire into his Cloſet never ſo duely, and imploy himſelf there never ſo devoutly in Prayer, Meditation and Communion with God, yet to have no body to talk to of Religion afterwards, when he comes forth, nor to hear it talk'd of, muſt needs be a great damp to him, and if not quite unbend, muſt yet however very much *Slacken* the *Spring* of his Devotion. Which by the way is the great diſadvantage of *Hermits* and Solitary Recluſes. Their Light Shines only through an empty Medium, without meeting with any Body in its way to return it, and ſo wants the Reflection of its own Beams. They may have a good Principle of Spiritual Life in them, but the Heavenly

Heavenly Plant is too much ſtreightned and bound up to thrive, and cannot ſhoot forth its Branches very far (how good ſoever its Root may be) for want of Liberty and Room. But then where's the Difference in this reſpect betwixt living in a Deſart and in the World, ſince Religion is in a manner as little Diſcours'd of in the one as in the other? Why truly the odds is not much, ſave only that what is actually thus in Society, as Men are pleas'd to order it, muſt of neceſſity be ſo in perfect Solitude, and that in the World, as wicked and ill order'd as it is, a Man may poſſibly meet with a Correſpondent in Piety with whom he may Traffique and Negotiate in the Affairs of Heaven, which in a Deſart he cannot, but till he does do ſo his Caſe is the ſame with that of a Hermit, (only in ſome Reſpects a great deal worſe, as liable to the Aſſaults of bad Diſcourſe as well as to the want of Good) and his Religion has the very ſame diſadvantage to contend with. And that truly a very great one. For even Fire it ſelf will languiſh and go out if it want Air, and ſo will Devotion too if it have not vent by good Diſcourſe, which Fans and Ventilates its Holy Fire, and ſerves (even as much as Fuel it ſelf) to nouriſh and keep it alive. And I cannot but reckon the want of this among the chief Cauſes of the great and long lamented Decay of Chriſtian Piety. For Converſation is the very Air and Breath, I had almoſt ſaid the *Lungs*, of Religion, without which it will be in danger of being ſtifled and choak'd up, but with which it will glow, and flame out, and burn bright. And therefore ſince to talk of Religion is an Exercile that tends ſo much to the Advantage of it, every Man certainly owes ſo much at leaſt to himſelf, and

the Care of his own Soul, as frequently to Uſe and Practice it. But further,

Secondly, 'Tis alſo a Duty that every Man owes to his *Neighbour*; whom he is bound to love as himſelf, and whoſe Spiritual Welfare therefore he is to regard and ſet forward as he would do his own. Now he cannot expreſs this his Charitable regard to his Neighbour better, nor promote his Soul's Health and Happineſs more than by uſing Pious and Religious Diſcourſe to him in his Ordinary Converſation with him. For as Evil Communication Corrupts Good Manners, ſo Good Communication will Reform Evil Ones, and make them that are Good better. And ſince Wicked Men, thoſe Emiſſaries of the Devil, are ſo buſie to ſeaſon thoſe they Converſe with, what they can, with the Helliſh Leaven of their Lewd, Prophane, and Immoral Talk, why ſhould not Good Men, if 'twere only to Countermine the others Wickedneſs, think themſelves as much concern'd to diſpoſe Men to Goodneſs by their Pious Diſcourſe? Not that after all they can reaſonably hope to do as much Good by their wholſome, as the others do Miſchief by their poiſonous Breath, becauſe theſe latter row with the Stream, and have the Bias of Corrupt Nature on their ſide. But however a great deal of Good may be done, and if any thing will reform the World, and revive in it the Old Evangelick Spirit of Primitive Piety, it muſt be Good Familiar Diſcourſe. For beſides the many particular good Offices that may be done with it by informing the Ignorant, by awakening thoſe that do not Conſider nor Practice what they know, by quickning the Lukewarm, by Comforting the Afflicted and the like, there is this general Advantage

tage that will further accrue by it to Mankind, People will ſee and be Convinc'd that there is a Senſe of Religion in the World (which truly they are tempted to queſtion when they hear no body talk of it) and that there are ſome in it that in ſpite of all the Diſcouragements of a perverſe and Corrupt Age, dare own and ſtand by the Cauſe of God, do not ſcruple to declare what Maſter they ſerve, by wearing his Livery, are neither aſhamed of what they profeſs, nor afraid of any ill Conſequences of profeſſing it, which muſt needs be a great Comfort, Incouragement and Edification to all that are Witneſſes of ſuch a truly Great and Noble Inſtance of Chriſtian Bravery. And truly as eaſy and as pleaſant as the Paths of Piety and Religion are, a little Company would do well in the way to Heaven, as well as upon other Roads, and there is no Traveller ſo active and full of Spirit, but what would Travel better in Society with others, than all alone by himſelf. *Prov.* 27. 17. *As Iron ſharpneth Iron, ſo a Man ſharpeneth the Countenance of his Friend*, ſays *Solomon*; that is, quickens and enlivens him, and ſets a new Edge both upon his Wit, and upon his Paſſions and Affections. 'Tis ſo in Other things as well as in Religion, but Moſt of all in Religion, the Impreſſions of which nothing will make enter ſo deep, or remain ſo long in the Hearts of Men, as the ſerious and frequent uſe of it in Ordinary Diſcourſe. I ſay *Ordinary* Diſcourſe. For to talk of it upon Solemn Occaſions only, looks too much like a *Formality*, and though good Books and Sermons be of Excellent Uſe, and may here and there do a great deal of Good, yet they are but dead things in compariſon of thoſe *Living Births* of Piety that come from the Mouth

in Converſation, when Hearts truly toucht with the Love of God communicate their Light and Heat, and blow up one anothers dormant Fires into a burning and ſhining Flame. And therefore ſince there is ſo much Edification in Religious Diſcourſe, the great Advantage that accrues to our Neighbour as well as to our ſelves by it, may ſerve as another Argument both to Oblige, and to Perſwade us to the Practice of it. But we are yet further to Conſider,

Thirdly, That 'tis alſo a Duty that every Man owes to *God*, for whoſe Glory he was made, and whoſe Honour and Glory by the great Law and End of his Creation he is to ſeek and advance, and which he cannot better promote than by Religious Diſcourſe, by talking Honourably of God, and ſpeaking Good of his Name, by repreſenting the Excellency of his Being and Nature, the Order and Wiſdom, the Juſtice and Goodneſs of his Government, the Reaſonableneſs and Equity of his Laws, the Pleaſantneſs and perfect Freedom of his Service, the great Inſtances of his Fatherly Love and Kindneſs to us here, and the Glorious Rewards that he has prepared and reſerves for us hereafter, beſides thoſe more direct and immediate Glorifications of God, which conſiſt in Acts of *Praiſe* and *Thankſgiving*, which by themſelves make a good part of Religious Diſcourſe. By theſe we ſhall render God and his ways lovely and amiable in the Eyes of the World, win over Subjects to his Government, ſet up his Kingdom in their Hearts, raiſe Religious Sentiments in the Minds of Men, and ſtir 'em up to the Love, Fear, Worſhip and Adoration of the Great and Good God, and to expreſs their Devotional Affections to him in Conformity

formity to his Will, and in Obedience to his Laws, which after all is the trueſt Honour and Glorification of God, according to that of our Saviour, *Joh.* 15. 8. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much Fruit.* And thus alſo upon the Account of the Duty we owe to God, as well as that we owe to our Neighbour and our Selves, we are Obliged to the Practice of Religious Diſcourſe, which now upon this threefold Ground appears to be a real part of the Duty of Man.

I might further argue the ſame from the Natural End and Uſe of *Speech*, which without doubt was given us for higher and more Material Purpoſes, than to drive Bargains upon the Exchange, or to talk Politicks over a News Letter, or to hold an Impertinent chat in Goſſiping Company about Cloaths and Faſhions, and the little Affairs and Tranſactions of the Neighbourhood. 'Tis remarkable that among all the Creatures of the World, Man is the only one that has Religion, and the only one too that has Speech, and is there not great reaſon to think that one of theſe was Naturally intended in order to the other? And what ſhall a Man talk of, what Subject is there that is Worthy of his Diſcourſe, if not that which is at once his *Perfection*, and his *Diſtinction*.

But this Matter is ſufficiently clear'd from *Reaſon*; all therefore that I ſhall further add in Confirmation of it ſhall be from *Scripture*. To this purpoſe I might alledge that general Exhortation of our Saviour Chriſt, *Mat.* 5. 16. *Let your Light ſo ſhine before Men, that they may ſee your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven*; which without doubt is as applicable to good Words, as

to

ſo good Works, as being alike Exemplary, and alike tending to Edification. But I ſhall lay the ſtreſs of the Matter upon two or three expreſs Texts that ſpeak more home to the Point, and indeed ſo home as to decide it. And firſt I take hold of thoſe plain words of St. *Paul*, *Epheſ.* 4. 29. *Let no corrupt Communication proceed out of your Mouth, but that which is good to the uſe of edifying, that it may miniſter Grace unto the Hearers.* Again, ſays the Apoſtle, *Col.* 4. 6. *Let your Speech be alway with Grace, ſeaſon'd with Salt, that ye may know how ye ought to anſwer every Man.* Again, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 11. *Wherefore comfort your ſelves together, and edify one another, even as alſo ye do.* And again, *Heb.* 10. 24, 25. *Let us Conſider one another, to provoke unto Love, and to Good Works* ——— *Exhorting one another*, &c. Than which few Texts nothing can be more plain, and 'tis no great ſign of our Reverence to Holy Scripture that ſuch plain and poſitive Injunctions of it ſhould be ſo little regarded.

And thus you ſee how both Reaſon and Scripture Conſpire to bind it as a Duty upon us, to Seaſon our Diſcourſe with the things of Religion, which is that *Salutare Condimentum*, that Divine Salt, that will give a wholeſome and reliſhing Savour to our Converſation, and withal (which is another property of Salt) preſerve our Graces from Corruption and Decay. And truly Conſidering the Moment of the things themſelves, and the great Uſefulneſs of talking of them, though there were nothing of Duty or Obligation in the Caſe, one would think that People ſhould Diſcourſe of little or nothing elſe, and ſhould be ſo far from declining this important Subject in its proper times and places, that they ſhould fall abruptly into it, force

a Diſcourſe of it, talk of it in Seaſon, and (if that can be) out of Seaſon too, with Occaſion and without Occaſion, and ſhould even ſtop and lay hold on one another as they meet in the very Streets to talk of the great Concernments of Religion and of another Life (forgetting the little Trifles of this) ſo that the Main Intercourſe and Tranſaction of Mankind ſhould be about the One thing Neceſſary, and the whole World ſhould be but as one great *Spiritual Exchange.*

Why, thus I believe it will be under the Glorious and Happy Interval of the Church, when the true Primitive Spirit of Chriſtiany (which is now a Body without a Soul) ſhall revive, and the Antichriſtian one ſhall be deſtroy'd, when Truth and Righteouſneſs ſhall return to the long forſaken Earth, and Devotion and Charity be ſet again upon the Throne. Then the Holy Spirit of God will again deſcend in *Tongues* of *Fire*, and as the Minds of Men become more Spiritual, and refine more and more from the Dregs of Earth, their Converſation ſhall ſtill grow more Divine and Heavenly. Then will the preſent Impertinencies of Society be exchang'd for nobler Subjects of Diſcourſe, and inſtead of the vain Trifles and Amuſements of this World, the great things of Religion and Heaven ſhall be the Common Theme, which ſhall be talk'd of with all mutual Freedom and Temper, without Reſerve, without Paſſion, without Affectation, and without any of thoſe little Deſigns and Artifices which now both diſguiſe and diſreliſh Converſation, and make Men ſuſpicious and jealous of one another. All ſhall be then open, free and ingenuous, every Man's Heart a *thorough light* to every Man, as having no fear of what

what is bad, nor ſhame of what is good. So that they ſhall talk of what is Beſt in the beſt and moſt indearing Manner, till the Earth which is now polluted and prophaned with vain and wicked Converſation, ſhall be ſanctify'd as it were into another Heaven, and the Conferences of Men ſhall be like the Diſcourſes of Angels and glorified Spirits, *full of Grace and Truth.* Thus I ſay 'tis reaſonable to think it will be, but in the mean time how would it both amaze and trouble any conſidering Man to ſee how this great and excellent Duty (for ſo I now call it) is neglected, how little Diſcourſe there is of Religion paſſing in the Chriſtian World, how Shy, Wary, and as it were Aſhamed Men are of it, how it is Baniſh'd and Excluded from all Company, and forc'd to retire into Churches for Sanctuary; in ſhort, how it is not only Careleſly omitted, but even induſtriouſly ſhun'd and avoided, and that by Men otherwiſe Good and Pious, and whoſe particular Profeſſion it may be, obliges them to another ſort of Deportment? But I have drawn a ſad, and black *Nightpiece* of this already, and therefore need not further illuſtrate it here. Only let me ask you what would you think of this Story I am about to tell you from an Author of great Wit and Obſervation? Two Religious Perſons, of an Order very Auſtere, and whoſe Habit ſufficiently ſignified the Auſterity of it, had ſome Occaſion to be at Court; where they happen'd to fall into Company with a Man of much Wit, and that paſſed with all for one of great Intelligence, was known to deal much in News, and to be able to tell it agreeably, and with a good Grace. Who ſeeing himſelf in Company

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Company with two ſuch pieces of Gravity, thought he muſt now act another part, and ſo laying aſide the uſual Topicks of his Diſcourſe, he talk'd to 'em of nothing but of Devotion and Piety. But he quickly found himſelf miſtaken. For our Holy Fathers perceiving that their Courtier and Statesman would tell them no News, and that he was for talking to them only of Religious Matters, went out of the Room no leſs diſguſted than diſappointed. What, ſay they, as they were going out, does the Man take us for a Couple of Fools, does he think we are good for Nothing but *Devotion*?

Good for nothing but Devotion! Strange that Men ſhould think themſelves affronted by being counted Devout, and thus cowardly diſown and be aſhamed of their Character and Profeſſion, and that at the very time when they wore the Signs and Badges of it upon their Backs! One would think it ſhould be the Faſhion for Men both to talk, and to be talkt with in their own way, and about things relating to their Profeſſion. And ſo 'tis in all things beſides, in all Arts and Sciences, Trades, Callings and Occupations of Life, except only in Religion, and here even the very Profeſſors of it ſtart back, and are ſtruck Dumb, will talk of any thing rather than of the beſt and greateſt Subject, and which they are alſo ſuppoſed to underſtand beſt; and as ſome are ſaid to glory in their Shame, ſo theſe are aſhamed of their Glory. But yet however the Cauſe of Religion (thanks be to God) is not yet ſo deſperate, but that ſhe has ſome Friends left that dare and will ſtand by her, and are not afraid to wear her Colours, and publickly to own their Relation to her in the midſt of a Wicked

and

and Irreligious World. Which brings me to the laſt thing propoſed, which was

Part. III. Thirdly to ſhew that thoſe who are very good indeed, and have a due Senſe of Religion, and a thorough Zeal for it, will ſhew it by their Diſcourſe. I have already touch'd upon this in the Entrance upon this Subject, but ſhall now give it a more particular Conſideration. And for the proof of it we have a great deal of Reaſon, and (thanks be to God) ſome Experience. For though there are ſome Degrees of Goodneſs that will be overborn by the forementioned Difficulties and Diſcouragements, yet there are ſome again that will not, but on the Contrary will outweigh them, and prevail againſt them. To which agrees that of our Saviour, *out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth ſpeaketh.* The Words have a particular Force and Emphaſis in the Original, ἐκ τῆς περισσείας τῆς καρδίας, out of the overfulneſs, redundancy, or ſuperfluity of the Heart. There are ſome Meaſures of Grace and Goodneſs which the Heart can hold in and keep to it ſelf, but if larger quantities be pour'd into it, it will run over, and diſcharge it ſelf into the Tongue, and ſo tho' every degree of Depth will not make it overflow, yet a very high and ſwelling Tide will, and out of the *Abundance* of the Heart the Mouth will be ſure to ſpeak.

For I Conſider in the Firſt place, that he that has a great Senſe and Impreſſion of Religion upon him, and whoſe Heart does thus *Abound* with it, muſt have a great Meaſure of *Faith*. For Faith being the great Mother Virtue, and the Head-ſpring of all that is good in us, it muſt as all other Springs do,

do, at leaſt riſe as high as the Streams that iſſue from it. The thing I intend in plain Words out of Figure is this, that our Faith being the Principal and Foundation of our other good Works and Habits, it muſt bear Proportion with its Effects. So that he that has a great Meaſure of Religious Impreſſion upon his Heart, muſt have a Meaſure of Faith in Proportion to it. That is, he muſt firmly believe, and be thoroughly perſwaded of the Truth of Religion, and of all the Fundamental Points of it. And that not only Habitually and in General, ſo as to be able to ſay Amen to the Creed when 'tis rehears'd, or to Anſwer in the Affirmative to the Articles of it when he is put to the Queſtion, *Doſt thou believe*, &c. or to ſubſcribe to it if occaſion be to ſhew his Orthodoxy, and that he is no *Heretick*; (for he that has no Senſe of Religion in his Heart, and makes no Conſcience of it in his Life may do all this) but alſo Actually and in particular, that is, I mean he muſt not only think thus of the Points of Religion whenever he thinks about them, but muſt alſo actually and effectually think of them, and have as it were a preſent view and intuition of what he believes before him. He muſt be a Believer not only in *Habit*, ſo as to be denominated a Chriſtian, and not a Jew or a Mahumetan, but in *Act*, ſo as to be an Attending and Conſidering Chriſtian. He muſt in ſhort not only have a Dormant and Periodical Faith that returns upon him at ſome certain Seaſons, and for the reſt of the time ſleeps and ſlumbers in him, but a quick, lively, actual and awaken'd Faith, ſuch a Faith as is next to Viſion. As for Inſtance, The Exiſtence of a Future World; I ſuppoſe ſuch a One not only to believe

believe this Habitually, that is, to be ſo far Convinc'd of the Truth of the Propoſition, as to be ready to Subſcribe to it whenever the Queſtion is put to him, or if occaſion require, to write a Book in Defence of it, but to have the Actual thought of it reſiding in his Mind, to Converſe in the other World much after the ſame manner as other Men do in this, to See it and Feel it, and have as it were a Spiritual Senſation of it; in ſhort, to have it ſo intellectually preſent to him, and ſet before him, as ſcarce ever to loſe either its View, or its Impreſſion.

This is that Faith which overcomes the World, and very properly makes thoſe that have it more than Conquerors. The ſteddy View, or rather Poſſeſſion they have of the other World gives them an eaſy Victory and a daily Triumph over this. And though this be a very high, I queſtion not but that it is an attainable degree of Faith, and that there are ſome in the World that have it. But now the Things of Religion are of ſuch vaſt importance that if thus believed in the *Heart*, they will by their own weight force their way into the *Tongue*. Little things may be eaſily ſuppreſs'd, or Great ones that are believ'd with a lazy and imperfect Faith, but 'tis impoſſible that ſuch things ſo believ'd ſhould be kept to a Man's ſelf. No, he will be ſo full of them, and ſo big with them, that he will even Travel with the uneaſy Burthen, and be in Pain till he be deliver'd of it. The great things of the other World will be like Fire within him, and will ſo warm and inflame him with their Heat, and ſo dazzle and overflow him with their Light and Glory, that he will be no more

more able to forbear talking of them, than St. *Steven* when he look'd ſted'aſtly into Heaven, and ſaw the Glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding on his right Hand, could forbear crying out (though he knew he ſhould further inrage his Enemies, and forfeit his Life by it) *Behold, I ſee the Heavens open'd, and the Son of Man ſtanding on the right hand of God.* Such irreſiſtible Force and Efficacy have the great Objects of Religion as well upon the *Tongues* as upon the *Hearts* of Men, when they are ſet before them in the next View, and diſplaid in a full Light by that Faith which is the Subſtance of things hoped for, and the Evidence of things not ſeen.

For I Conſider again that this Actual and Lively Faith ſuppoſed to be in him that has this great Senſe and Impreſſion of Religion upon him, will not only raviſh and Tranſport him with the glorious and beatific Views of the other World, but will alſo (even by ſo doing) Eclipſe, Extinguiſh and utterly Annihilate all that we call Great and Conſiderable in this. The Earth ſeems but as a Point to a Mathematical Eye, and what then will it appear to the Eye of ſuch a ſteddy and intent Believer? Why even juſt Nothing. He ſees its Mighty Frame diſſolving, and all its Pomp and Glory vaniſhing and diſappearing, or rather he does not ſee it, but overlooks it, glances his piercing Eye beyond it, and caſts it into a *Shade*, making it no part of his inlarged Proſpect. And when the whole World appears to him ſo inconſiderable, ſo next to nothing, how flat and inſipid, how dead and unmoving muſt all Diſcourſe of it be to him! and what pleaſure can ſuch a one take to talk or be talk'd to an hour or two together about thoſe tri-

fling Subjects that find the Body of Mankind in Diſcourſe, and give Entertainment to moſt Companies, and what a Penance muſt it be to his Spiritual and high-ſet Ear to be condemn'd to ſuch Impertinence! And yet he cannot be wholely Silent neither, but muſt even to keep himſelf awake, talk of ſomething, and what ſhould that be, ſince all Worldly Subjects are ſo unſavoury to him, but of the great things of Religion, whereof his Heart and Head too are full, and which imploy both his Meditation and his Affection.

I ſay *Affection*. For I further Conſider that Love is ſo Talkative and Self-betraying a Paſſion that it cannot well be Conceal'd when in any conſiderable degree. Upon which Account, as well as ſome others, it is deſervedly compared to *Fire*. 'Tis a Fire that not only burns, but Flames out, and diſcovers it ſelf by its own Light. Love is more capable of Hypocriſy, than of Diſguiſement, it being more eaſy to pretend and Counterfeit it where it is not, than to Conceal it where it is. A Man may indeed, without much difficulty, diſſemble his Hatred, or his Envy, or his Malice, or even his very Anger; and 'tis no very rare thing to meet with a ſort of People that have the Art ſo to manage their Reſentments, as to ſmile in a Man's Face at the very time when they are the moſt bitterly affected towards him, and would do him the greateſt Miſchief. But Love will not be ſo managed, but like Lightning will break through all Reſtraints till it either finds or makes a Paſſage. 'Tis ſo we know in all Worldly Objects, the Love of which is quickly known in thoſe who have a Tongue to expreſs it (which in theſe Caſes at leaſt) is always obſerv'd to be a true Index of the Heart. How

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eaſy a Matter is it to find out a *Lover* by an Hours Converſation with him! And how quickly does a *Covetous* Perſon betray himſelf, who can indeed hide his Money, but not his Love of it. For how Feelingly and ſenſibly and Cordially does he talk of it himſelf, and with what a true Guſto, and luſcious Reliſh does he hear it talkt of by others! How often are Bills and Bonds, Principle and Intereſt, Leaſes, Fines and Mortgages in his Mouth, and how does he even ſhake and tremble all over whenever he pronounces the Sacred Name of his dear Idol, ſo that you may eaſily feel how the Pulſe of his Heart beats, by the Motion of his Tongue. And why then ſhould not the Love of God and of Religion be as active and powerful as that which is Worldly, or Senſual? Without queſtion it would if it were in the ſame Degree, and did Men but love God and Heaven at the ſame rate as Miſers do the World (and I hope there are ſome that do ſo, and and a great deal more) they would be as forward to talk of theſe great things, as the others are of the little Objects of their Vile Paſſion. For why ſhould the Divine Lover be the only One that's aſham'd of his *Beſt Affection*, and unwilling to talk of the Delight of his Heart?

Eſpecially when 'tis further Conſider'd that the excellent Perſon we are now ſpeaking of, who has ſo great a Senſe of Religion, and lives under ſo Governing an Impreſſion of it, has not only a great Love and Reliſh of Piety, but alſo a great deal of Charity for his Neighbour, and withal no leſs a Zeal for the Honour and Glory of God, which two laſt will be of as much force to determine him to Religious Diſcourſe upon the Account of his Brother's Edification, as the Former was to diſ-

charge himſelf of a full Burthen, and for the eaſe of his own Heart and Mind. So that every way it ſeems not only Natural, but even neceſſary and unavoidable that thoſe who are very Good indeed, great Proficients in Piety, Mature Saints ſhould frequently Diſcourſe of Good things, however Chriſtians of a lower Form, and leſſer Age, *Infants* in Religion may not be yet arrived to the uſe of their Speech.

And does not the Scripture here alſo ſtrike in with Reaſon when it makes Religious Diſcourſe ſo conſiderable an Ingredient in the Character of a Good Man? For ſays the Royal Prophet of himſelf, and ſuch as himſelf, *Pſal.* 119. *I will ſpeak of thy Teſtimonies even before Kings, and will not be aſhamed.* And ſays his Wiſe Son, *Prov.* 10. 11, 21. *The Mouth of a Righteous Man is a Well of Life,* not a ſtanding Pool, but a Well, that is always ſpringing and riſing up, *and the Lips of the Righteous feedeth many,* that is to be ſure with Good and Wholeſome Diſcourſe. And this the Prophet *Malachi* repreſents not only by way of Character, as a thing that ſhould be, but as Matter of Fact, as the actual Practice of the Good Men of his time. *Mal.* 3. 16. *Then they that fear'd the Lord ſpake often one to another, and the Lord hearkned and heard it, and a Book of remembrance was written before him, for them that fear'd the Lord, and thought upon his Name.* And, to add no more, our Saviour tells us in plain Words, *Mat.* 12. 35. that *a Good Man out of the Good Treaſure of the Heart bringeth forth good things.* And to the like purpoſe elſewhere, *Mat.* 13. 52. he Compares a Good and a Wiſe Man to an Houſholder, which bringeth forth out of his Treaſure things New and Old, that is, produces

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out of his rich Stock of Knowledge and Goodneſs variety of Spiritual Matter for the Entertainment and Edification of thoſe that Converſe with him.

And thus you ſee both from Reaſon and Scripture that however the moderately Good and Vertuous may be diſcouraged from the Practice of Religious Diſcourſe, yet thoſe that are eminently ſo, that are very much under the Power and Senſe of Religion, will ſhew it by their good Words as well as by their good Works, upon all Occaſions making Ladders from Earth to Heaven, and ſeaſoning their Diſcourſe with that Divine Salt, without which nothing can be grateful and ſavoury to a truely Pious and Chriſtian Palate. But then if all very good Men will Conduct and Order their Converſation thus, I leave it to be concluded by the way, conſidering how little good Diſcourſe there is going, what a Few very good Men there are in the World. Theſe indeed were always very thin Sown, but never certainly ſo thin as now, and accordingly never was Religion ſo little talkt of as Now. Diſputed it is enough, perhaps too much, but as for ſerious and practical Diſcourſe of it, ſuch as comes from a Principle of Goodneſs, and tends to the promotion of it, I think 'tis almoſt quite laid aſide. And yet ſome Few there are upon whom the Divine Spirit does yet deſcend in Tongues of Fire, who are both Burning and Shining Lights, have both Devotion and Courage enough to utter the wonderful Works of God, and whoſe Communication (as the Son of *Sirach* adviſes) *C.* 9. *v.* 15. is in the Law of the Moſt High. And theſe are they that bear up the ſinking Foundations of the Moral World, that keep Life and Breath in the Body of languiſhing and dying Piety, that main-

tain a ſenſe and remembrance of it in the Minds of Men, who would otherwiſe forget what Religion meant. And as the number of theſe Holy and Righteous Perſons ſhall either increaſe or decreaſe, ſo in all Human probability will the Tide of Religion (now almoſt at loweſt) either Ebb or Flow.

Directions for the Ordering our Religious Diſcourſe.

I ſee now nothing further wanting to the Intireneſs of this Diſcourſe, unleſs it be to lay down ſome Rules and Directions for the better Management of our Religious Converſation. Whereof the Firſt that I would commend and have obſerv'd is this.

1. *Never to talk of Religion but when you think of it.* 'Twere well if you thought of it ſome time before hand by way of Preparation, but that you do ſo at the very time when you talk of it, is I think abſolutely neceſſary. The Importance of the Subject is certainly great enough to *demand* this Caution, only perhaps it may be thought too great to *Need* it. But that's a Miſtake. For there are a ſort of People in the World that have ſuch a lazy, unthoughtful, liſtleſs, yawning way of talking of Religion. that one would almoſt think they talkt in their ſleep. They have a Road of pious Expreſſions, and are got into a certain Set of good Words, ſuch as *Lord Jeſus Chriſt, What pleaſe God, The Lord's Will be done, We are all Mortal*, and the like; which upon all Occaſions they go over by rote, juſt as a Sea-Man does his Compaſs, or rather as a Bell-Man does his godly Rhimes, without thinking what they ſay, or being at all affected with it. Methinks when I hear ſuch People talk of Religion, I fancy the Chimes going

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to the Tune of a Pſalm. The Truth is, there is but too much reſemblance between them, they both go as they are Set, and One almoſt as Mechanically as the Other. Only there is this unhappy difference in the Caſe, that the Bells oftentimes call People to their Devotion, whereas theſe Sleepy, dreaming Talkers of Religion do but make 'em ſick of it. Whenever therefore you talk of Religion, in the firſt place be ſure to be *awake*, and to think and conſider of what you ſay. The Next thing I would Commend, by way of Direction, is,

2. To talk of it *Seriouſly*, *Gravely* and *Soberly*, towards which the Conſideration of what is ſpoken will be a very great help and advantage. There are two ſorts of People that tranſgreſs this Rule, in diſcourſing of Religion. Thoſe that talk of it *Irreverently*, and with a looſe and careleſs Ayre, as if they thought it a Trifle, hardly Worthy of ſpending their Breath about it; and thoſe that talk of it *Preciſely*, after a Canting, Whining and Sighing Manner, with an affected Tone, and an ill-contrived Look, as if they were Conjuring or telling Fortunes rather than diſcourſing of Holy things. Now though theſe are Perſons of a Character very different from one another, yet I think they both agree in this, that inſtead of advantaging the Intereſt of Religion, they do but Proſtitute, Prophane and make it Cheap, and ſet the taſte of thoſe of good Senſe againſt it, who cannot indure to ſee ſo Serious and Sacred a thing as Religion is, either unhallow'd, or ridiculed. I would therefore have Religion talkt of, Firſt Reverently and Seriouſly, in Oppoſition to the Way of the *Libertine*; and then Gravely and Soberly and Manly, in Oppoſition to that of the *Phariſee*, without any

Sighing, or Winking, or Catching the Breath or *Skrewing* up the Mouth, or any other fantaſtick *Affectations*. For all this is but the *Grimace* of Religion, ſuch as is forced and put on by thoſe that have it not in its true Power and Spirit, and which thoſe that have it, do not find Occaſion or Inclination to uſe. For intending only to expreſs what they Feel, and what really paſſes in their Souls, they content themſelves with the Natural way of doing it, which is ſimple and plain; whereas the other not ſpeaking from an inward Fund of Goodneſs, but being only to act a part, or apt (as having no certain Meaſure) to over-act it, and ſo run into Affectations. The ſubſtance and intendment therefore of this Rule, in ſhort is, *So to talk of Religion, as not to betray the Want of it by your Talk.* For another Direction I would Commend

3 That Religion be diſcours'd of *Practically*. And that both as to the Matter, and as to the Manner, wherein I intend to exclude the Way of *Notion*. and the Way of *Contention*, the former not tending much to the promoting of Edification, and the latter being always an hindrance to it. When we talk of Religion we ſhould remember the Deſign of it, and accordingly Diſcourſe of it not Notionally and Speculatively, nor yet Wranglingly and Contentiouſly, either to ſhew our own Skill in Arguing, or to try anothers, but Cordially and Spiritually, Chriſtianly and Devoutly, after a plain, hearty and affectionate Manner, ſo as to anſwer the ends of that Charity which Edifies, and not of that vain Knowledge which puffed up. Controverſies do but little good even in *Writing*, wherein Victory is oftner ſought than Truth, but much leſs when managed by the Tongue, there being

but

but very few that have either Art enough to talk Cloſely, or Temper enough to talk Calmly upon thoſe ſhort Views, and that very broken and tranſient Conſideration of the Subject which are allow'd in the way of Oral Diſcourſe, eſpecially in Common Converſation. And there is nothing more indecent than to ſee People grow Warm and out of Humour, much more to be Noiſy and Clamorous, and in a Paſſion about Religion. 'Tis indeed unbecomming enough at any time, or upon any Occaſion, but never does it ſit worſe upon Men then when they make that the Subject of their fierce Contentions, which ought to be the Cure of them. But to give Religion yet a further Advantage from our Mouths 'twere well if Care were taken.

4. That it be diſcours'd of *Seaſonably*. The Wiſe Man tells us that to every thing there is a Seaſon, and withal that every thing is beautiful in its Time. Not that it can ever be out of Seaſon to do good, but only that there are ſome Seaſons and Circumſtances wherein Diſcourſes of Religion are not ſo apt nor likely to do it. And theſe Seaſons ought carefully to be avoided, and fit and proper ones Choſen for this purpoſe. For there is Prudence and Management in all Things, and if we make Choice of a Convenient time to give Phyſick to a Man's Body, much more ſhould we when we adminiſter to his Soul. And that I call a convenient time, when 'tis likely Men will be the Better for what is ſaid to them, let it be when it will. For there are times again when Men are not likely to be the Better, but rather the Worſe, and to talk Religion to them then, is both to ſpill your Phyſick, and to injure your Patient. Upon which Conſide-

Conſideration perhaps it would not do ſo well to fall aboard a Man abruptly, and chop down right into a Diſcourſe about Religion with him, without ſome occaſion or other, either Naturally offer'd or Artificially contriv'd. For that looks either like Phariſaical Oſtentation of Religion on your ſide, or as if you thought the Perſon you beſpeak in too great a neceſſity of ſuch an Application. Neither of which can be very acceptable to him. No, there are ways of Addreſs and ſweet Inſinuation that may be uſed both more acceptably, and more ſucceſsfully, whereof we have variety of Inſtances in the Converſation of our Saviour Chriſt, and particularly in his intercourſe with the *Woman* of *Samaria*. Again, For the ſame reaſon though there be occaſion offer'd perhaps it would not be ſo Convenient to take hold of it in a great and promiſcuous Company, whoſe Tempers and Humours you know not, leſt they ſhould be more offended with your ſhew of Oſtentation, than Edify'd with the real Goodneſs of your Diſcourſe. Nor again it may be would a Wiſe Man be very free of Religion at a Publick Feaſt, when beſides the Number and the Mixture of the Company, People are commonly diſpoſed to greater Freedom and Pleaſantry than is Conſiſtent with the Gravity of ſuch ſerious Diſcourſes. Nor again would I have Religion Mingled with our *Sports*, nor with the Hurry and Noiſe of *Buſineſs*, nor with our *Drink*. For what an Odd thing would it be to hear a Man come out bluntly with Religion, or begin a Diſcourſe about Heaven when he is a Hunting and the Dogs at full Cry, or when he is dealing and trading upon the *Exchange*, or when he is making himſelf chearful in a Tavern. I ſay *Chearful*, for though he be not Drunk,

yet

yet Religion and a Bottle make but a very indifferent Mixture, inſomuch that the Indecency of it is got into a Proverb, which forbids *Preaching over one's Glaſs.* But there is another ſort of mingling of Religion, and that is when we ſow and ſcatter it hear and there among our Worldly Talk, without obſerving due diſtances between them, after the manner of thoſe who will talk a little of Religion, and then a little of News, Buſineſs or Faſhions, and then a little of Religion again; ſo Chequering and Interlacing their Diſcourſe with theſe two extremely different Subjects. But this is an unbecoming Mixture, and ſuch as does not well Comport with the Dignity of Religion, whoſe Sacredneſs implies *Separation*; and requires it ſhould be diſcours'd of alone, and by it ſelf. We are are alſo to Conſider to whom we ſpeak, and not talk Religion to a Man that is Drunk, or in a great Paſſion, or who profeſſedly Scoffs and Laughs at all Religion, and thoſe that talk of it, making them both the Object of his Mockery and Ridicule. For this would be in our Saviour's Expreſſion, to caſt Pearls before Swine, which one would not do, not only for the value of the *Pearles*, but alſo out of ſome Pity and tender regard to the *Swine* too, conſidering how much our good Diſcourſes will inflame the Reckoning, and aggravate the Condemnation of thoſe wicked Wretches, whom they do not amend, or by Accicident make worſe. The ſhort then of this Rule is, that we take Care ſo to Time, Accommodate, and Circumſtantiate our good Diſcourſes that they may really do good, and make thoſe to whom they are Addreſs'd the Better for them. Which Caution ought more particularly to be obſerv'd in that Nicer and more Delicate part of Religious Diſcourſe, which

which conſiſts in *Reproof* and Brotherly Admonition, for which (as being an ungrateful Work and Labour of Love) the ſofteſt and moſt Favourable Seaſons are to be ſought out, the *Mollia Tempora Fandi*, when Men are moſt treatable and beſt diſpoſed, moſt ſedate and recollected, and when this harſher Phyſick will Work moſt kindly with them. And for this we have the Example of God himſelf, who ſeems to have uſed the like Addreſs towards the Firſt Offender, Chuſing to treat with him about his Miſcarriage not immediately upon the Commiſſion of it, when his Paſſions were up, and his Soul ruffled and diſcompoſed, but, as is moſt probable, at ſome convenient diſtance, and after ſome time of Recollection, when the Sediment of his troubled Spirit was fallen, and the Regions of his Soul pretty well clear'd up, *in the Cool of the Day*. I ſhall now add but one Direction more concerning the Management of Religious Diſcourſe, and that is

5. To join along with it the great Advantage of a good Life, which will give Weight to our Words, and Attention to our Hearers, and is it ſelf whether in the Pulpit, or out of it, the beſt Eloquence. With this, nothing ſo mean or ordinary can come from us but what will carry a Grace and an Authority with it, and will be well accepted. But without it though we ſpeak with the Tongues of Men and of Angels, we ſhall be but as a ſounding Braſs, and a tinkling Cymbal. I ſay though we *ſhould* ſo ſpeak. But then again I muſt tell you, that 'tis no very eaſy matter for an ill Man to do ſo. For being a Stranger to the inward Life and Power of Religion he can hardly be ſuppoſed to know enough of it to talk well of it, nor again is it likely he ſhould

ſhould have Courage enough to ſpeak out all that he knows, becauſe the greateſt part of it will recoil upon himſelf. But ſuppoſe he ſhould be able to get over theſe two Difficulties, yet after all the Beſt that he can ſay, will have but little Power to perſwade, and that becauſe He ſays it, who is not himſelf perſwaded by it. If therefore you would have your good Diſcourſe have as good Succeſs, take Care that your Hands do not Contradict your Tongue, that your Deeds give not the Lie to your Words, and that you live your ſelf as you exhort others. Which Direction, though the laſt ſet down, is yet the Firſt I would have follow'd.

There are ſome whom if you were to hear talk a little while, and knew no more of them, you would think they were Saints newly dropt from Heaven, and that they had nothing of *Adam* in them. So Charmingly ſet, and Spiritually tuned are their Tongues, and ſo Divine and full of Heavenly Ayre is their Diſcourſe. And thus far 'tis well. But when after having heard their Seraphic Voice a Man ſhall look down and behold their Cloven Feet, and ſhall obſerve that thoſe who talk the Language of *Angels*, do yet hardly live the Life of *Men*, what a Surprize, and what a Scandal muſt ſuch a Diſcovery be! I ſay Scandal, for Nothing brings a greater upon Religion than a Hypocrite diſcover'd. As long as he keeps on his Diſguiſe 'tis well enough, but when that's off, he is like a Sepulchre uncover'd, all over Offence and Abomination, and even Good Men are thought the worſe of for his Sake. Thoſe that have Once found a pious Talker to be an ill Liver, are apt ever after ſo to join thoſe Ideas together, as to fancy they are all alike; and will be hardly perſwaded to truſt a Man of a *Religious*

Outſide

Outſide any more. However to be ſure He himſelf will never be thought well of again, and if he ſhould chance to be reform'd in Earneſt, he can never hope to Convince thoſe that knew him before the Reality of his Change, it being impoſſible he ſhould do it by greater Tokens of Sanctity and Profeſſions of Piety than he gave out before when he was known to be no more than a *Pretender*. Such a one therefore he will be ever taken to be, and as long as that Preſumption lies upon him, he muſt not expect to do any good by the Moſt Heavenly Diſcourſes his Head can invent, or his Tongue can utter. His Foul Actions will Continually baffle all his fine Harangues, and what was impiouſly alledg'd againſt Our Saviour will be a juſt and reaſonable prejudice here, *Joh.* 10. 20. *He hath a Devil, why hear ye him?*

But the truth of it is, theſe Men were much better let all Diſcourſe about Religion alone, and leave it to ſhift for it ſelf, than to pretend to ſtay up her tottering Ark with their unhallow'd hands. They do but diſcredit and profane it, and bring an ill report upon it, and withal diſcourage thoſe Few from talking of it who could do it to better purpoſe, but will not, for fear they ſhould be taken for Hypocrites too as was remarqu'd in the Beginning. And beſides one would think it ſhould be a Puniſhment to them to talk of things they have no true delight in, or Reliſh for, and which recoil again upon their guilty, and perhaps bluſhing Faces. However to be ſure they can't do it with that open Freedom, that liberal Aſſurance, and that Ingenious Ayre which all Diſcourſe about Religion ſhould have, and which a Clear and Good Conſcience can only give. Which puts me in mind of a very pertinent

tinent ſaying of St. *Auſtin*, ſpoken in relation to that Petition of the Lord's Prayer which is by ſo many turn'd into a Curſe upon themſelves, *Forgive us our Treſpaſſes as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us.* Vis Securus dicere! ſays he, Fac quod dicis. *Would you ſay it Securely? then do what you ſay.* And the ſame I apply to Diſcourſe about Religion. Would you talk of it Securely, with true Freedom and Aſſurance, without any ſecret Checks or faint-hearted Miſ-givings? The Rule is both ſhort and infallible, *Fac quod dicis*, do what you ſay. Practice as much of Religion as you Talk, and then you have a full Licence to Talk as much of it as you Pleaſe.

Tom. 8. in *Pſal.* 103. p. 426.

A Diſ-

A Diſcourſe of the Fear of DEATH.

HEB. ij. 15.

——And deliver them who through fear of Death were all their Life-time Subject to Bondage.

AND ſure there are none that have more need of a Deliverer, or that are with more Difficulty deliver'd, than the Perſons of this Character and Condition. For as of all the Evils incident to Human Life there is none greater than the Fear of Death (for even Death it ſelf may not be compared with it) ſo alſo there is none more Natural and Neceſſary, and Conſequently more difficult to be either prevented or removed. The Fear of Death is juſt as Natural as the Love of Life, and nothing leſs than Death it ſelf can wholly ſilence either of theſe Paſſions. That indeed is ſo intire and ſo thorough a Divorce that it not only diſunites the Soul from the Body, but from the Love of it too; and by that at at once cuts off all the ties that faſten us to the Corporeal and Senſible World, which we cannot be perfectly looſen'd from as long as we are united to our own Bodies; But there is nothing elſe that I know of that

that has Power enough to make us wholly out of love with Life, and conſequently utterly to rid us of the Fear of Death. Not to Fear Death therefore at all, a Man had need actually Die, or be Dead, for ſo long as he Lives, ſo long as he is united to his Body, and by that to a ſenſible World, which by the General Order of Nature gratifies and entertains all thoſe Powers of Senſation which are at preſent awaken'd in him, and ſo gives ſome Reſt and Repoſe to his Natural Deſire of Happineſs, ſo long he muſt needs fear Death, if 'twere upon no other account than as 'tis a diſſolution of Life, and of that Natural Sweetneſs and Pleaſure that attends it. So that the Fear of Death ſeems to be like ſome of thoſe inveterate Cleaving Diſeaſes that are ſo lodged and radicated in the Blood and Spirits, ſo incorporated as it were into the very Habit and Conſtitution of the Body, that they cannot be put off but when that is, and are Curable only by *Death*, the *Univerſal Remedy*.

It lies indeed very hard upon Man, and 'tis what renders his Condition in this World very pitiable, that an evil which is ſo great in it ſelf (as the Fear of Death is) ſhould withal be ſo difficult to be removed. That that which be-clouds the Light of his Mind, and is of it ſelf enough to diſreliſh the whole Comfort of his Life, ſhould be ſo cloſe an Attendant to both, and that what makes a Man ſo burthenſom and uneaſy to himſelf, ſhould be as inſeparable from him as himſelf. But thus it is, and the ſame may be ſaid in proportion concerning the other inſtances of his Miſery as well as this. The Leſſer Evils of Human Life have many and cheap Remedies, and are cured as eaſily as they might be born, while in the mean time thoſe which are leſs

Supportable are (to complete the Miſeryof Life,and if poſſible, to wean us from it) at the ſame time leſs Curable. But as there is no Temporal Evil leſs ſupportable, when in Extremity, than the Fear of Death, ſo there is none leſs Curable than that.

The Greatneſs of this Evil, and the Difficulty of its Cure have made Life a very great Miſery to ſome Men, and truly a very Mixt, Inſincere, Queſtionable Bleſſing to all, and both together have drawn down Pity and Compaſſion from Heaven, and made it an undertaking worthy of the Son of God to relieve poor Mortals in ſome Meaſure from an Evil which they are ſo little able to bear, and leſs able to remove, that ſo the Burthen if not abſolutely taken off, might yet be ſomewhat lightned, and better proportion'd to the Shoulders that were to ſtand under it, and that as far as was Poſſible *this bitter Cup might paſs from us.* By the way we may gueſs at the Malignity of the Diſeaſe from the Nobleneſs of the Remedy. Too Noble indeed for a Creature, if one of leſs value would have ſerved the turn. But ſuch was the Stubbornneſs of the Fatal Evil that it would yield to no leſs Soveraign application, and ſuch the Goodneſs and Mercy of God that he thought it not too Good, but would rather his own Son ſhould once taſte of Death, than that Man ſhould always live under a conſtant dread and fearful expectation of it. For it ſeems it was one part of the wonderful undertaking of Chriſt to deliver Men from the Fear of Death as well as from the Evil Conſequences of it, as we may here learn from the Apoſtle, who ſpeaking of this undertaking of Chriſt, tells us, *That foraſmuch as the Children are Partakers of Fleſh and Blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame.* And that to a dou-

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ble End or Purpoſe. 1. *That through Death he might deſtroy him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil.* which denotes more immediately our Deliverance from the evil *Conſequences* of Death. And 2. (as in the Words of the Text) *That he might deliver them who through Fear of Death were all their life-time Subject to Bondage.* Wherein is expreſs'd our deliverance from the *Fear* of Death, which is here made a part of our Saviour's undertaking for Mankind, and Particularly mention'd as one of the powerful Motives that drew him down from Heaven to take upon him our Nature, and to ſuffer in it.

We have here the Fear of Death, the Bondage to which this Fear Subjects Men, and the Deliverance from this Fear and from this Bondage.—— *And deliver them who through Fear of Death were all their life-time Subject to Bondage.* So that the Words do upon the firſt View point out to us theſe Three Subjects of Diſcourſe.

Firſt, *The Fear of Death.*
Secondly, *The ſad effect of this Fear where it is predominant.*
Thirdly, *The Remedy of Both.*

Firſt, *Of the Fear of Death.* This in General is either *Natural* or *Rational.* By the Natural Fear of Death, I mean that which prevents all Reaſon and Diſcourſe about it, as not depending upon any thing without, but reſulting wholly from the inward Frame and Conſtitution of our Natural Being. By the Rational Fear of Death I here underſtand that to which we are not pre-determin'd by

any Natural Prevention or Inſtinct, but which is purely grounded upon Reaſon; by that Meaning, not preciſely right or ſolid Reaſon, but all or any ſuch Motives or Arguments as our Reaſon ſhall offer and preſent to us indifferently, whether they are Solid or Not.

Which Fear of Death however it may be often found to be *Irrational* upon a true account and eſtimation of things, there being not perhaps ſufficient Ground for it, may yet be very properly call'd a *Rational* Fear in the Senſe that I now uſe the word Rational in, as 'tis oppoſed to that Natural Fear of Death which has no Reaſon or Argument, but mere Nature for its Foundation. I ſhall diſcourſe of theſe two Fears diſtinctly.

1. There is a Natural Fear of Death in Men, which is not an Original but a derivative Paſſion, reſulting from the Natural Love of Life. We naturally fear Death becauſe we naturally love Life. So that this Paſſion is only a Conſequence of the other, or rather but a different way of expreſſing it.

If it be demanded why there is ſuch a Paſſion as the Fear of Death, or rather as the Love of Life in our Natures, I anſwer for many wiſe Ends and important Reaſons, theſe two eſpecially.

1. That Man might perſevere to *Live*.
2. That he might Live in *Society*.

1. That he might perſevere to *Live*, that he might continue in his preſent State, and abide in the Station wherein God had placed him, and not upon the account of any Trouble or Pain (whereof he is like to have no want as long as he lives here)

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Voluntarily quit his Poſt, till God ſhould be pleaſed to diſcharge him. And not only ſo, but that he ſhould be induced to take care of his Life, and avoid all ſuch Things or Actions as might ſhorten or deſtroy it, and uſe all ſuch Means as are neceſſary to preſerve and prolong it, which he would either Forget or Neglect, or Studiouſly Omit to do were it not for that Pleaſure and Sweetneſs, which is annex'd to Life. Which is almoſt all the Pleaſure that ſome Men have, who by the Iniquity of their Circumſtances may be ſo far ſtript of the Particular Enjoyments and Comforts of Life, as to have little more left them than the bare Natural Pleaſure and Sweetneſs of Life in General, were it not for which there would be Nothing in the World to ingage their further Continuance in it.

2. That he might live in *Society*. As Man is not a Creature fit to live out of Society, ſo were it not for the Fear of Death he would not be fit to live in it. For though reaſonable Creatures ought to be govern'd by Reaſon, yet in the Poſture that Human Nature now ſtands in Reaſon alone is too weak a Principle to keep a World of Men in Order, whoſe Corrupt and Irregular Paſſions would upon all Occaſions tranſport them into great Violences one againſt another if they had nothing elſe but mere reaſon to reſtrain them. Paſſion therefore that is not to be govern'd by *Reaſon*, muſt be govern'd by *it Self*, that is, One Paſſion muſt be ſet to Confront and Counterpoiſe another. And ſince Rational Creatures will not be order'd in a Rational way, and keep within the limits of their Duty upon the Conſideration of Right and Equity, Force muſt be made uſe of as a Suppletory to the defects of Reaſon, and here comes in the Neceſſity of Civil

Government. But now if Men did not Naturally dread and ſtand in Fear of Death, the Government would have no ſufficient hold upon them, or Aſcendant over them. But by the help of this Paſſion they are kept in Awe, and ſo in Order; which therefore ſerves as an Inſtrument of Government, and as an expedient to procure the end of a Sociable Life.

I paſs now Secondly from the Natural to the Rational Fear of Death. This I ſhall Conſider,

1. As it generally is.
2. As in ſtrict and right Reaſon it ought to be.

1. As it generally is. It is generally very great, I may ſay extravagant. There is nothing ſo much, nor ſo univerſally fear'd as Death. Men fear that who fear nothing elſe, and not only the thing it ſelf, but even the Name of it is terrible, and makes thoſe that hear it tremble. *Death*, there is a terror in the very Sound, and our Blood and our Spirits do as it were retire from it. Nay even that which carries any Relation to it, or any ſenſible repreſentation of it, or any way brings it to our Mind, the very *Picture* of it is formidable. The hearing of a Paſſing-Bell, the Solemnity of a Funeral, the Dreſs of the Mourners, nay, even the ſight of an empty Coffin that has only the *Colour* of Mortality, ſtrikes us with Horrour. And yet theſe are only ſome of the Out-guards that make up the Retinue of the King of Terrours. How dreadful then does he himſelf appear, and how do the greateſt Kings and Emperours, nay, what is more, *Philoſophers* and *Chriſtians* tremble before him! Some

Some Few indeed there are (but they are generally thoughtleſs and unreflecting Perſons) who have little more than the Natural Fear of Death. That indeed they cannot ſhake off, but as to any dread that ariſes from Conſideration or Rational Apprehenſions they have little or nothing of it, but go out of the World almoſt as unconcernedly as they came in. But theſe I ſuppoſe are inſtances of a rare Contingency, and I know of nothing but either great *Stupidity*, or extraordinary *Sanctity* that can produce ſuch a degree of indifferency and unconcernedneſs. But for the generality, Men have too much Apprehenſion, and too little Innocence, to be thus fearleſs and unmoved at the Approach of Death. They fear it upon rational Views and Proſpects, as well as by a Natural Horrour, and in this reſpect the moſt thoughtful and active Minds are apt to fear it moſt, as being moſt capable to ſurvey it in its ſeveral Views and Poſtures, and able to draw the moſt lively Images and Repreſentations of it. The better the Imagination here, the brighter the Scenes, and the ſtronger the Fear. But they that are under the leaſt rational Concern for Death (becauſe indeed they think little about it) fear it however to great degrees, and upon ſeveral accounts. For Death has various faces according as the Light is wherein we view it, and every Aſpect looks grim, and excites its proper Fear in the Hearts of Miſerable Men. Some fear it as 'tis a quitting of the Body, which conſidering the cloſe Union that is between Body and Soul, they imagin cannot be done without great Pain. Some again fear it as 'tis a leaving of the World, which is ed and enjoy'd with too much Paſſion not with Trouble and Sorrow. Others again

a thing that indangers their Being, and threatens them with Annihilation. Others as an entrance upon a new and altogether unexperienc'd State and way of Life, which muſt be now led in a new World, in new Company, and after a new and ſtrange Manner. And laſt of all Death is fear'd in reſpect of thoſe diſmal Conſequences it draws after it upon the Guilty and ill-affected Soul, whom it delivers over to the juſt Judgment of God and Eternal Damnation. Theſe are the ſeveral Views and Proſpects of Death, and the ſeveral Arguments upon which Men ground their Fear of it. And ſo much to repreſent the Rational Fear of Death as generally it is. But Men being every whit as unreaſonable in their *Fears* as in their *Deſires*, it will be requiſite that we proceed to conſider this Rational Fear of Death.

2. As in ſtrict and right Reaſon it ought to be. Imagination has here very much Swoln and blown up the Idea of Death, and brought in a very large and frightful Bill of Terrours, but for our Comfort Reaſon will ſtrike off a great part of the Accompt.

For Firſt, 'Tis moſt Certain that Death ought not in reaſon to be fear'd upon the account of that *Pain* which is vulgarly preſumed to attend the ſeparation of the Soul from the Body. This Fear is unphiloſophical, as being founded upon a falſe Notion of the Union between Soul and Body, which is not (as our groſs Imagination is apt to Suggeſt) by any Contact, Implication, or Coheſion of one of theſe Subſtances with the Other, as Bodies are united together, but is only a Mutual Reciprocation of Action and Paſſion between Soul and Body, which are then ſaid to be United when Certain Motions

of

of the Body depend upon Certain Thoughts of the Mind, and when Certain Thoughts of the Mind follow upon Certain Motions of the Body. This is the Union of Soul and Body according to its *Formal* Notion. The *Cauſe* of this Union is no other than the general Law or Will of God. The *Condition* of it is ſuch a Certain Temper or Diſpoſition of the Bodily Frame, as ſuppoſe, that the Heart be able to ſend up animal Spirits to the Brain, and that the Brain be able to ſend them back again by the Nerves into the Muſcles for the Motion of the Members. As long as that Mechanical Diſpoſition of the Parts laſts, ſo long by the Order of God this reciprocation of dependance as to Action and Paſſion does alſo laſt, and when that Diſpoſition ceaſes then by the ſame Order of God this Reciprocation Ceaſes. And this is what we call *Death*, *viz.* when ſuch a Spirit has no longer any relation of dependencyas toAction or Paſſion upon ſuch a Body. But now what *Pain* can we conceiveto be in this? 'Tis plain that all the Pain is previous, in thoſe preparatory Motions which ſerve to demoliſh the *Mechaniſm* of the Body, which when it has receiv'd its laſt Indiſpoſition, can no longer affect the Soul with Pain, all relation of dependency being then ſuppoſed to be at an End. So that that Pain which we groſly fancy to be in Death upon the Separation of Soul and Body, is really the Pain of *Sickneſs*, and ought to be reckon'd only upon that Score, and 'tis Certain that many a Man has undergone, and does daily undergo more of this Pain without Dying, than many of thoſe do who Die. And if theſe Pains are not ſo mightily fear'd when conſider'd as terminating in *Sickneſs*, why ſhould the Difference of *Death* make them ſo dreadful, which can

add

add nothing to the *Pain*, whatever it may do beſides? So that Death is not to be fear'd upon this firſt and common Pretence.

Neither Secondly, Is it to be fear'd as 'tis a *Leaving* of the *World*. For beſides the Vanity and Vexation of all things here (which will ſoon make a Wiſe Man more Sick of the World than of any other Diſeaſe) that which we call Leaving the World is only leaving one certain part of it, and that in all probability the meaneſt part of God's whole Creation. The Meaneſt in its Natural State and Order, beſides that acceſſory Vanity brought upon the Creature by Sin. *Rom.* 8. 20. And ſince the Univerſe is of ſuch an unimaginable extent, and that there is ſuch variety of Manſions in the Houſe of God, ſhall we be ſo fond of one Room, and that in all likelihood the worſt, as to dread a removal into another Region! For as I ſaid by our leaving the World we can underſtand no more than our leaving this part of it, where we were born, and bred, and have for ſome time had our dwelling. So that in this reſpect to Die is but like being ſent Abroad to Travel into a Foreign Country, or, if you would have a Compariſon from Nature and Philoſophy, like the paſſing of a Comet out of one Vortex into another. 'Tis not to be exported beyond the Univerſe into an Empty ſpace, nor to be our ſelves reduced into a State of *Emptineſs*.

For Thirdly, As to the pretence of *Annihilation*, 'tis Certain, Firſt, That there is no reaſonable ground for any ſuch Suſpicion, ſince both Philoſophy

phy and Scripture are ſo directly againſt it. But Secondly, If there were, as ſome Fancy, and more perhaps wiſh, yet why ſhould this be made an Argument of Fear? Is it ſuch a dreadful thing to be in a ſtate of Indifferency and Neutrality, to be neither Happy nor Miſerable? Is there ſo much terrour in *Nothing?* 'Tis a State (if I may call it ſo) which we have all been in before we were made, and 'tis what we experiment in great Meaſure every Night, when in a deep and ſound Sleep we forget our ſelves and the whole World, and loſe even the Conſciouſneſs and Perception of our very Being. And is there any thing ſo dreadful in this? Or does it make us afraid to repoſe our Heads upon our Pillows?

Then Fourthly, As to the Objection of *Novelty* taken from a New Life, New World, New Company and the like, this one would think ſhould rather invite, than terrify us. For would we always dwell here in theſe Houſes of Clay, and be no otherwiſe than we are, and ſee no more of the Works of our Great Creator; We are Curious and deſirous of Novelty while we live, and are for making New Experiments in Nature, and New Diſcoveries upon this little Ball of Earth, and are not a little pleaſed when by the favourable aid of a *Teleſcope* we have ſpied out a New Star, or a New Feature in the Face of the Moon, and ſhall we be afraid of Death becauſe it makes that Inſtrument Needleſs, becauſe it preſents us with a New Scene, becauſe we ſhall then Change *States*, *Worlds*, and *Companies?* Ay but to Converſe with Spirits—— But wilt not thou then be a Spirit too? And will it not then be as Natural and Sutable to thee to Converſe with

with Spirits, as it is now to Converſe with Men? For what is it but Similitude and Proportion that reconciles either? We ſee that Perſons of low Rank and Education are aſhamed to be among Courtiers and People of high Degree, who yet Converſe freely with one another. So that we may well diſcount all theſe ſeveral pretences for the Fear of Death out of our Reckoning, and then there will remain only One, *viz.* the ſad Conſequences of Death in reference to the Judgment of God, and Eternal Damnation. And indeed this is the only thing for which Death ought reaſonably to be fear'd, and this carries an infinite Terrour with it. Not that Death is always to be fear'd for this (for then indeed our Condition were deplorable) but that whenever Death is Terrible this is the thing that truly makes it ſo, and the only thing that can rationally do it. All the reſt are but Bugbears to fright Children, this is the only *Rational* Terrour in Death. And ſo the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 15. 56. *The Sting of Death is Sin.* As this is that which gives Death all its Power over us: So this is that which makes it truly formidable to us. This is that which arms it with a *Sting*. And 'tis a ſharp Sting indeed, whereby it wounds Men with Eternal Pains hereafter, and with moſt amazing apprehenſions here. Which leads me to Conſider,

Secondly, *The Sad Effect of this Fear of Death where it is predominant.* Many are the Sad Effects of this Paſſion, but that mention'd in the Text is that it Subjects thoſe that are under it, during their whole Lives (ſuppoſing that they are under it ſo long) to a State of *Bondage*, to a Miſerable Spirit, and Slaviſh Temper of Mind. By which the leaſt

that

that we can underſtand is that the Fear of Death is enough to ſowre all the Sweetneſs, and ſpoil all the Comfort of Life, or that there is no tolerable Enjoyment of Life till a Man is got above the Fear of Death. Not therefore to mention the Throws and Agonies, the Diſtractions and Confuſions of Mind that the Fear of Death produces in impenitent and deſpairing Sinners in their *laſt* Hours, whereof Hiſtory and Obſervation may furniſh us with many Tragical Inſtances (though by the way, at the rate that Men live, I wonder there are not more) I ſhall conſider only at preſent that conſtant Habitual effect (as I may call it) which it has throughout their whole Lives, that which the Text here takes Notice of, and expreſſes by their being all their Life-time ſubject to *Bondage*. The Senſe of which I cannot better expreſs than I have already in this Propoſition; that there is no tolerable Enjoyment of Life till a Man is got above the Fear of Death.

When once indeed a Man is arrived to this pitch, he may then be ſaid truly to *Live*, and may call Life his own, as being able to reliſh and enjoy every part of it, but till then his Life may be more properly call'd a Penance, a Torture, a Death, any thing than an Enjoyment. For let a Man's Condition in this World be otherwiſe never ſo Fortunate, and the Circumſtances of it never ſo delightſome and advantagious; let him have his own *Wiſh* and others *Envy*, let him be never ſo full of Honours, Pleaſures, and Riches, yea, and of *Days* too wherein to enjoy them, yet what Content or Satisfaction will he be able to take in all this, if the whole ends in dark Proſpect, and he has upon him all

all the while the Apprehenſions of an angry God, and the Fears of Death, Judgment and Hell? With what ſatisfaction can a Man, whoſe Mind is fill'd and over-ſet with theſe great Ideas, enjoy the moſt luſcious Pleaſure that this Life, or this World can afford? How can he that expects a Miſerable *Eternity* reliſh any of the little Divertiſements of *Time*? How can he that fears he ſhall enter upon the Portion of the Damn'd immediately after Death find any Savour in the ſhort Delights of a vain tranſitory Life? How can theſe little Pleaſures reliſh with thoſe mighty Fears, the Pleaſures of Time with the Fears of Eternity, and how can he that apprehends everlaſting Sorrows then, find in his Heart to laugh or rejoyce now? *Solomon*, indeed bids his young Man rejoice in his Youth, and let his Heart chear him in the Days of his Youth, but the difficulty is how he ſhall be able to do this, if at the ſame time he is to conſider what follows, that for all theſe things God ſhall bring him into Judgment. How can Temporary Joy and the Apprehenſions of Eternal Judgment conſiſt together! And does not the Wiſe Man imply by this ſevere *Irony* that they cannot.

Eccl. 11. 9.

The Capacity of Man is too narrow to yield a full Attention to two contrary Sentiments, eſpecially if one be ſo very much ſtronger than the other; and we find that actual Pain does always leſſen, and if very great, wholly ſwallow up and drown the Senſe of actual Pleaſure. For what would the ſweeteſt Strains in Muſick ſignify to a Man in the Extremity of the Stone or Gout? But now the very Apprehenſion of an Evil, if very

very Extraordinary, though *Future*, will fill and ingage the Capacity as much, and ſometimes more than the preſent actual Senſe of one that is leſſer. And we may gueſs by our Saviour's Agony in the Garden, at what rate to meaſure the *Expectation* of an Evil, and how many degrees of *actual* Suffering it may be ſet againſt. How then muſt the Fears of Death and Judgment, and the Wrath of God, not for a few Hours only (as in our Saviour's Caſe) but for a whole Eternity fill, employ, divide and diſtract the Capacity of him that is under them, and conſequently not only alloy and diſguſt, but even deaden and make utterly inſipid whatever would otherwiſe be ſavoury and reliſhing in his Life, and diffuſe a general Bitterneſs through all the Enjoyments of it!

Further, So vaſt is the diſproportion between Temporal and Eternal, that the bare Contemplation of Eternity, though without any relation to Happineſs or Miſery, as indifferently conſider'd, with reſpect only to its infinite *Duration*, will bring to Nothing and utterly Annihilate all the Thoughts, and all the Accounts of Time, and make a Man, while he has that immenſe Idea before him, overlook all the Pleaſures and Enjoyments of Ten Thouſand Ages. And how then may we ſuppoſe will the Thoughts and Fears of a *Miſerable* Eternity damp all the Pleaſure, and imbitter all the Comfort of a Man's whole Life! I ſay the Thoughts and Fears of a Miſerable Eternity, which will lie down with him when he goes to Bed, awake with him when he opens his Eyes (if we can ſuppoſe a Man with thoſe Fears at all to have ſhut them) riſe with him when he gets up, be his conſtant Companions

panions all the day, and haunt him wherever he is, even in his laſt Refuge the *Tavern*, whatever he is about, and with whomſoever he Converſes. And how, do we imagine, ſhall a Man that has ſuch a black Cloud upon his Mind, that carries ſuch a conſtant Hell about him, enjoy Life, I had almoſt ſaid *Endure* it, and not chuſe Strangling rather than Life, than ſuch a Life, in the midſt of which he may truly ſay that he is in Death. But if he ſhould make a ſhift to endure it, yet what a Miſerable Slaviſh Life muſt ſuch a One lead, under what Bondage muſt he groan, and how Paſſionately methinks do I hear him cry, *O wretched Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the* Terrors *of this Death!* Which leads me to Conſider,

Thirdly and Laſtly, *The Remedy both of this Fear and of this Slavery.* The Fear of Death, to reſume our former Diſtinction, is either *Natural* or *Rational.* Againſt the Firſt of theſe he muſt be a bold Empiric that ſhall undertake to preſcribe a Remedy. God has not provided any againſt the Natural Fear of Death, nor is the thing it ſelf capable of any, and there is great Reaſon to think that even the Son of God himſelf was not exempt from it, much leſs then will he exempt us. But there is a Remedy provided againſt the Rational Fear of Death. Now this I ſhall conſider,

1. As it is already wrought and effected by Chriſt, who is here ſaid in the Text to *deliver them who through Fear of Death were all their Life-time Subject to Bondage.*

2. As it is to be further wrought and completed by every Man for himſelf.

Firſt,

First, *We have a Remedy againſt the Fear of Death provided for us already by Chriſt.* This the Apoſtle plainly intimates where having ſaid, *that the Sting of Death is Sin*, he immediately adds, *But thanks be to God which giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* The Victory, but over what? Why over Sin immediately, and by that over Death. *For the Sting of Death is Sin.* In the ſame Meaſure and Proportion therefore that Chriſt has deliver'd us from Sin, in the very ſame he has alſo deliver'd us from Death, and from the Fear of Death. But now he has deliver'd us from Sin, both as to the Power of it, and as to the Guilt. From the Power of Sin by his Grace, and from the Guilt of Sin by his Blood. But from neither actually and immediately, but only in Power and Poſſibility. For when I ſay that Chriſt by his Blood has deliver'd us from the guilt of Sin, I would not be ſo underſtood as if actual Pardon or Juſtification were the immediate Effect of Chriſt's Death, for then no Man need fear *dying*, or take any Care how he *lived*, but only that Chriſt has made Sin actually Pardonable, and has put all Men into a Capacity of being diſcharg'd from the Guilt of it. And ſo when I ſay that Chriſt by his Grace has deliver'd us from the Power of Sin, I do not mean, neither ought I, that all Men are immediately, and *ipſo Facto*, Sanctify'd and made Holy by the Redeeming Grace of Chriſt, but only that they have a Power and a Capacity given them of becoming ſo. This therefore being the Meaſure of our Deliverance from Sin, we muſt conclude that the ſame is the Meaſure of our Deliverance from Death, and that Chriſt has ſo far deliver'd us from all reaſonable

1 Cor. 15. 57.

Fear of it, as he has put us into a Capacity of avoiding thoſe ſad Conſequences of it, for whoſe ſake alone it is juſtly to be fear'd. And truly they are unworthy of the Redemption of Chriſt who do not think this a ſufficient Deliverance on his Part, and who will not be ſo grateful as to acknowledge it in thoſe Words of the Apoſtle, *Thanks be to God which giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* But then, this being thus far only a Capacity, which through default on our ſide may never be brought into act, will oblige us to look further, and to conſider this Remedy.

2dly, *As it is to be farther wrought and Completed by our ſelves.* Here we ſtrike into a large and beaten Road, and may meet with as many Remedies againſt the Fear of Death as there are Preſcriptions for the Cure of an Ague. Every one has his Receipt and his Direction, and a certain Writer, of no ordinary Fame, has, to make ſure Work of it, mix'd the Ingredients, and put them all into one Compoſition. But for my part I know but of one that is Effectual, and that will ſtand the Teſt either of a Sick Bed, or of a Sound Mind, and that is a good Life, a clear Conſcience, an honeſt Heart, and a well-order'd Converſation, to carry the Thoughts of Dying Men about us, and ſo to live before we Dye, as we ſhall wiſh we had when we come to it. This is a ſure Remedy, and that will certainly do the Work, deliver us both from the Fear of Death, and from the Slavery and Bondage that attends that Fear. As for other Remedies there's no depending upon them, for if they ſhould happen to take away our Fear, yet they

Monſieur *Drelincourt.*

they do not take away the *Ground* of it, and ſo prevail not by their own Strength, but by the Weakneſs of thoſe Minds upon whom they Succeed. But a good Life like a proper and true *Specific* ſtrikes at the Cauſe and Bottom of the Diſtemper, and removes not only the Fear it ſelf, but the Ground and Reaſon of it. It diſarms Death of its Sting, whereas other Remedies do at the moſt but Stupify *our Senſe* that we may not feel it. For after all the Arts that ſhall be uſed, and all the fine Conſolations that ſhall be addreſs'd againſt the Fear of Death, it cannot be denied but that Death is truly in it ſelf a terrible and dreadful thing to him whom it finds in an ill State and Courſe of Life, and that 'tis nothing but a Good and Regular one that can make it otherwiſe. If therefore you would not Fear Death, you muſt keep a due diſtance from Sin, which is the Sting of it, and if you would Die with Comfort, you muſt Live with Care.

And how infinitely does it Concern us all to do ſo! Every Man knows that he muſt Infallibly Die one time or other, and when that time comes, he knows withal how different his Sentiments and Apprehenſions of things will then be from what they are now, and particularly with what Strength and Vigour of Application he ſhall then wiſh he had led his Life well, and made good uſe of his time. Which if he has not, he muſt needs know withal what dreadful Agonies and Convulſions of Mind he muſt then be in, and with what dread and horrour he ſhall enter upon Eternity. And therefore if 'twere only to avoid this laſt terrible Plunge, this moſt frightful and uncomfortable *Exit*, it would be of the moſt important Concernment to every Man

to Live well, ſo well that he may Die without any other Agonies than thoſe that are Natural, and may at leaſt have *Hope* in his Death.

But are we concern'd only for this laſt Scene of our Life? Is it of no Conſequence to us to paſs the whole Courſe of it with Comfort and Satisfaction? Is it not the Intereſt and Concern of every Man to enjoy his Life with Pleaſure, as well as to leave it at laſt without Horrour? Is not every Man concern'd to provide that neither the Deſire of Life may imbitter his Death, nor the Fear of Death diſcomfort his Life? Is not Enjoyment of Life the very Life of it? Yes no doubt it is, and 'tis what all Men deſire, and in their ſeveral ways endeavour after. But then why don't they take more Care to live as they Ought, ſince that only can make them as Happy as they deſire? And indeed, Conſidering how certain and unavoidable Death is, how Natural and Neceſſary it is in ſome Meaſure to fear it, and how hard a thing it is to Conquer even the *Rational* Fear of it, and what a Melancholy Aſpect and Diſconſolate Influence this Fear has upon the whole Courſe of a Man's Life, how it damps its Pleaſures, and overcaſts all its Light and Glory, and that a good Life is the only ſure Antidote againſt this Fear with which no tolerable Enjoyment of Life can conſiſt, I ſay conſidering theſe things, one would think that every reflecting Man at leaſt, if 'twere only to enjoy Life while he has it, ſhould apply himſelf to the ſerious Study and Practice of Religion, and never content himſelf till by living better and better, and riſing higher and higher, he has at length attain'd to ſuch a degree of Chriſtian Piety, as will ſet him above the Fear of Death. For the ſhort is this, as long as Men fear Death,

they

they will have no tolerable Enjoyment of Life, and as long as they lead ill Lives they will be under a neceſſity of fearing Death, and therefore as long as they lead ill Lives they will lead very unhappy and uneaſy Lives, will enjoy neither themſelves nor their Friends, neither Soliſude nor Company, neither Buſineſs nor Diverſion, will be too much concern'd for the Future to be able to reliſh the Preſent; in one word, will *through Fear of Death be all their Life-time Subject to Bondage.* Which, if it cannot be avoided, is the Life of a *Slave* only, but if it can, 'tis the Life of a *Fool.*

Now to God the Father, &c.

A Diſcourſe Concerning the Extent of Chriſt's Satisfaction.

MAT. iij. 17.

This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.

THE Great Queſtion among the Philoſophers was concerning the *Origin* of Evil, whence and how it came into the World, but it would have been a more concerning Inquiry to have lookt about for a Cure of it, how the Power of Sin in us might be deſtroy'd, and how the Guilt of it might be expiated. Concerning the firſt of theſe, Philoſophy neither did nor could go any further than certain Moral Rules and Preſcriptions, the World having then no Notion, but what was very Confuſe, either of the Nature or of the Neceſſity of Divine *Grace*. And as to the Latter, though their early and general Practice of Sacrificing, and the great Streſs they laid upon that Way of Worſhip ſeem to imply that they had ſome Notion of the Vindictive Juſtice of God, and that ſome Atonement or other was neceſſary to appeaſe it, yet in this they came ſhort (which was alſo

ſo the Defect of the *Jewiſh* Religion) that the Sacrifices with which they fatted their Altars, were infinitely diſproportionate both to the God to whom, and to the End and Purpoſe for which they were offer'd, and ſo (as the Author to the *Hebrews* ſpeaks) *could never make the Commers thereunto Perfect*, it being impoſſible, as the ſame inſpired Pen aſſures us, that the *Blood of Bulls and Goats ſhould take away Sins.*

The World had ever ſome ſecret Senſe of the Neceſſity of an Atonement by Sacrifice to expiate for their Sins, but was utterly at a loſs what to offer. *Wherewithal ſhall I come before the Lord*, is a Queſtion that the Light of Nature might prompt a Man to move, but to which it could never return a proper Anſwer. And well may Man be at a ſtand to find out a Sacrifice worthy of God, when the whole Creation will not ſuffice for it. Nothing is worthy of God but God himſelf, and he muſt either want Satisfaction, or a Divine Perſon muſt give it. The Sacrifices of the Heathen and of the Jews, though of different Value and Efficacy, had yet both this Common Defect that they could not avail to a final and thorough expiation of any one Sin, and though God be ſometimes ſaid to ſmell a ſweet Savour in the latter of theſe, and to accept them among other Inſtances of Religious Homage, yet he was ſo far from being fully ſatisfy'd by them, or acquieſcing in them, that even while he commanded them as *Services*, he refuſed them as *Satisfaction. Sacrifices and Burnt-Offerings thou would'ſt not, then ſaid I, Lo, I come.* His own Beloved Son was the only Oblation that could deſerve the Name of a *Sacrifice* by fully anſwering the Demands of his Juſtice, and withal the only *Prieſt*

that was worthy to offer it, and in him it is that God after ſo many ineffectual Slaughters, ſo many *Vain Oblations*, declares himſelf at length fully ſatisfy'd and intirely pleaſed, and that by a Solemn Voice from Heaven, *This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed.*

The Words are that Illuſtrious Teſtimony given by God the Father concerning his Son Jeſus Chriſt at two very remarkable Times, Firſt at his Baptiſm in the River *Jordan*, and again at his Transfiguration upon Mount *Tabor*, where, as ſays Saint *Peter*, *He receiv'd from God the Father Honour and Glory, when there came ſuch a voice to him from the excellent Glory, This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed.* St *Peter* concludes from hence the certainty of the Chriſtian Faith, of that Goſpel which the Apoſtles Preach't, and indeed it is a ſufficient Argument of it, as proving both that Chriſt was the Son of God, the true Meſſiah that was to come into the World, and that God was fully ſatisfy'd in his Perſon and in his Undertaking, which are the two great Fundamentals of Chriſtianity. The firſt of theſe lies in the former Clauſe of the Text, *This is my Beloved Son*, the Second in the latter, *in whom I am well pleaſed*; that is, whom I not only love and delight in as to his Perſon, but alſo perfectly accept as Mediator to ſatisfy my Juſtice for the Sin of Man, and for whoſe Sake I am reconciled to him, and ready to beſtow both Grace and Glory upon him. So that here are two very great Subjects of Diſcourſe that do ariſe from the Words, the former part of which might give me Occaſion to aſſert the Meſſiaſhip of Chriſt, in oppoſition to the

2 *Pet.* 1. 17.

ver. 16.

the *Jews*, who do not acknowledge it, and the Latter to give an Account of his Satisfaction in oppoſition to ſome Chriſtians who either *Deny*, or *Miſconceive* it. The former of theſe has been already ſo abundantly eſtabliſh'd againſt the *Jews* by Chriſtian Writers, that I think I need not ingage in it. I ſhall therefore diſmiſs it with this ſhort Remark, That ſince there cannot be a greater atteſtation of the Truth of any Prophet's Miſſion than an immediate Voice from Heaven, had not Chriſt really been what he pretended to be, 'tis not conceivable that God who is a God of Truth would have honour'd him with ſuch a Teſtimony. If we could imagin that he would have concurr'd with him in his Mighty Works upon *Earth*, yet ſure we cannot that he would thus Miraculouſly teſtify of him from *Heaven*, had he been an Impoſtor. A Teſtimony ſo Compendious and ſo Deciſive, that it both excells and ſuperſedes all others, whether Humane or Divine. And accordingly we find that our Saviour appeals to this as his greateſt Credential. *If I bear witneſs of my ſelf*, ſays he, *my witneſs is not true. There is another that beareth witneſs of me, and I know that the witneſs which he witneſſeth of me is true. Ye ſent unto John, and he bare witneſs unto the truth. But I receive not Teſtimony from Man. I have greater witneſs than that of John.* And here he mentions two. His Miracles, and his Father's Atteſtation. *The works that I do bear witneſs of me that the Father hath ſent me, and the Father himſelf which hath ſent me hath born witneſs of me*; truly indeed and ſufficiently by the Voice of his Prophets, which yet breath'd in the Writings of the Old Teſtament, but never ſo remarkably and immediately as by his

Joh. 5. 31.

his own Voice from Heaven, when he ſaid, *This is my Beloved Son.* And what need we any further Witneſs of the truth of our Saviour's Miſſion, when we have one from Heaven that expreſly aſſures the World that he was the Beloved Son of God, which he could not have been had he been a Seducer, ſince the God of Truth cannot in any wiſe be a *Lover* of Impoſture and Deceit.

Thus much therefore ſhall ſuffice concerning the Truth of our Saviour's Miſſion, gather'd from the former Clauſe of the Text, *This is my Beloved Son.* Whence I proceed to the Conſideration of his Satisfaction expreſs'd in theſe Words, *in whom I am well pleas'd.* This Complacency which God the Father here expreſſes in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, though truly applicable, is not I preſume to be confined to his own Perſon, but to be extended to others for his ſake, and upon his Account, and if we will admit the Hypotheſis of a very extraordinary Pen, it may be extended to all the Works of God, which according to our Author, could neither have been at firſt Created, nor could afterwards ſubſiſt but only with reſpect to Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe Incarnation therefore was (upon this ſuppoſition) Neceſſary, if 'twere only by the Dignity of his Perſon to Sanctifie the Works of God, and render them truly worthy of their Author. As if all that Complacency which God took in the Works of his Hands, when upon a review he pronounc'd them Good, were founded, not upon their own proper work, (for as ſuch they were not worthy of the Action whereby they were produced) but upon that Relation which they bore

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to Jesus Christ, in whom only they become acceptable to God, and were it not for whose sake they could neither have been at first, nor would now any longer be. Which Notion, I must confess, seems mightily to be favour'd by all those Places of Scripture (and they indeed are many) which represent all things as Made by and for Jesus Christ, and as having also their Subsistence in and by him. But leaving this Notion to stand or fall by its own Measures (for I shall not wade so far out of my depth as to determine any thing in so nice a Matter) I shall chuse rather to understand the Complacency in the Text, as St. *Peter* seems to do, in reference to Man only, and that not consider'd as a Creature, but as a Sinner, and as by his Sin estranged from, and ingaged in a State of Enmity with God, who however he might at first delight in him, even without respect to Christ, before he had defaced that Divine Image which he had graven upon him, yet he cannot *Now be pleas'd* with him but in his Son. So that *well pleased* here being supposed to relate to Man as a *Sinner* will signify the same as *Reconciled*, and when God says, *This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*, it comes to as much as if he had said, This is He whom I Constitute and Accept as Mediator, to satisfy my Justice for the Sin of Man, and to work a Reconciliation betwixt us, and for whose sake I am, and declare my self fully Reconciled to him. According as 'tis said, that *he has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ*, and again, that *he has Made us accepted in the Beloved.* 2 Cor. 5. 18. Eph. 1. 6.

The thing therefore that will hence offer it self to our present Consideration, is, the Satisfaction of

of Chriſt, and that Reconciliation wrought by him between God and Man. Which I ſhall not conſider as to the *Truth* of it, nor as to the *Neceſſity* of it (having nothing to add to what has been already ſaid by our many Learned Anti-Socinian Writers upon theſe two Heads) but only as to the *Nature* and *Extent* of it, intending to rectify ſome popular and dangerous Miſtakes about it, by giving a clear and exact State of this Queſtion, *viz.* How far Chriſt has ſatisfy'd for us, or how far, and in what ſenſe God is ſaid here to be pleaſed with us, or reconciled to us in his Son.

This is what I intend; only I have one Remarque to make upon the two other Heads before I proceed to treat of this, which is, that whereas the Aſſertors of Chriſt's Satisfaction divide themſelves into two ſorts, ſome holding only the *Truth* of it, and others ſtanding alſo for the *Neceſſity* of it, this ſeems to me a very unneceſſary Diſtinction, and ſuch as at long run will wind up into one Bottom. Thoſe that ſtand for the Neceſſity of Satisfaction, mean that there is ſomething in the Nature of God that requires that Sin ſhould not go wholly unpuniſh'd, and that therefore if God will forgive it to the Sinner, he is Obliged to puniſh it in ſome other Perſon; ſo that God cannot forgive Sin without ſome Valuable Conſideration or Satisfaction made for the breach of his Laws. To this, thoſe who aſſert only the Truth of it without the Neceſſity, return, that God might, if he had ſo pleaſed, have remitted Sin *gratis*, without any Satisfaction, only in his *Wiſdom* he did not think *fit* to do it. And herein they both think and are thought to Contradict each other, and great Heats

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and Contentions have been Occaſion'd by this appearance of Oppoſition. But in my Opinion the difference between them is not ſo great as to deſpair of Accommodation, and I believe they are nearer to one another than they think they are. For when thoſe of the *Vindictive* way ſay that God could not forgive Sin without Satisfaction, they do not mean as to a *Phyſical*, but as to a *Moral* Power, not that he could not do it, *Abſolutely* ſpeaking, but that he could not *Hypothetically* ſpeaking, as a Being acting according to certain immutable Meaſures of Eſſential Perfection, in the ſame Senſe, as when we ſay God cannot Lie, which is not at all contradicted by ſaying that God could do it if he pleaſed, *Abſolutely ſpeaking*, ſince in that Senſe the Firſt do not ſay he could not, but only that he could not *Hypothetically* ſpeaking, as acting according to the Moral Perfection of his Nature. And do not thoſe of the other ſide in effect confeſs the ſame when they ſay that God though he might have done it if he had pleaſed, yet did not, all things conſider'd, think *fit* in his Wiſdom *to* do it? For need any thing be more impoſſible than what an Infinitely Wiſe Being does not think fit to do? And may not ſuch a perfect Agent be very well ſaid not to be able to do whatever he cannot do in Wiſdom? There is therefore thus far no Contradiction One ſays, God could not Pardon Sin, Morally ſpeaking, without Satisfaction, which the other does not affirm; and the other ſays he could do it, Phyſically ſpeaking, which the other does not deny. So that here is no Affirmation and Negation in reſpect of the ſame, and conſequently thus far no Oppoſition. I ſay thus far, for though both agree

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in this that God might Abſolutely do it, and that Hypothetically he could not, *i. e.* ſuppoſing him to act Conſiſtently with the Moral Perfections of his Nature, yet when they come to explain themſelves upon this laſt part, they ſeem to go off from one another again, and to ſtrike into two different Roads, which yet I believe will be found to meet in one. Both agree in this, that God could not Pardon Sin without Satisfaction, all things conſider'd, and ſuppoſing him to act according to the Perfection of his Nature, and that therefore upon the whole matter, Satisfaction was Neceſſary: Only here ſtarts up a Nicety, One reſolving the Reaſon of this into the *Juſtice* of God, and the Other into his *Wiſdom*. He might have done it, ſay thoſe of the latter way, if he had pleaſed; but in Wiſdom he did not think fit to do it after a full Conſideration of things. But whatever difference there may be in the Formal Reaſons of *Juſtice* and *Wiſdom* abſtractedly conſider'd, yet certainly there can be little or none in the Objects of them as they come under the conſideration of an Infinitely Perfect Being. For that which an Infinitely Wiſe Being propoſing the Greateſt and Nobleſt Ends, and proſecuting them by the apteſt Means, and in every reſpect acting by the beſt Meaſures does not after all think fit to do, will be as hardly reconciled to Juſtice as it is to Wiſdom. For if we will compare our Expreſſions with our Notions of things, what can we poſſibly mean by God's thinking a thing not fit to be done, or for him to do, but only that it is not a proper Means in order to the great Ends which he propoſes, his own Glory, and the good of the Univerſal Syſtem, that it is not fit according to the Order of things and the true Intereſt of the

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Reaſonable World that ſuch a thing ſhould be, and what is this in other Words, but that it is not juſt or equitable? So then what God cannnot Wiſely do, he cannot Juſtly do, and for God in his Wiſdom not to think a thing fit to be done, will come to the ſame as not to think it Juſt or Equitable to be done: For what is not, all things conſider'd, fit to be done, *Ought* not to be done; and, what ought not to be done, it can never be juſt to do. And then ſince God did not in Wiſdom think fit to Pardon Sin without Satisfaction, the reſult will be, that he did not think it a juſt thing to do it, and conſequently could no more do it in *Juſtice* than he could in *Wiſdom*. So that in all the ſeeming diverſity of Opinion, and after all the fierce Contention about this Matter, the ſame thing is at length intended, and thoſe *Prudential Reaſons* ſo mightily talkt of, and upon which ſo great ſtreſs is laid by ſome, reſolve at laſt into Reaſons of *Juſtice*. For if God did not in Wiſdom think fit to pardon Sin without the Satisfaction of Chriſt, what is this, but that he ſaw that ſuch a way of Pardoning Sin was not a fit Means to that end he propoſed to himſelf in the Government of the World: And what can be more unjuſt in a Governour, than to do any thing againſt the End of Government? The Reſult then of the whole will be, that in what ſenſe ſoever God may be ſaid to Pardon Sin *Freely*, the Satisfaction of Chriſt after all, is as Neceſſary to the Remiſſion of Sin, as that God ſhould be *Wiſe* and *Juſt*, which I think is Neceſſity enough, and enough to accommodate this Great Debate.

But after all, thoſe that hold the Truth of Chriſt's Satisfaction, muſt, in ſpite of all their willingneſs to keep up a Diſtinction, come over to thoſe that hold

hold the Neceſſity of it. For beſides that 'tis not Conceivable how ſuch an extraordinary Tranſaction as the Suffering of the Son of God for the Redemption of a Sinful World ſhould be true, if it had not been Neceſſary, it may further be conſider'd that if it be true *de facto* that Chriſt did Satisfy, then it muſt be as true that Satisfaction was requir'd, (for where nothing is due, nothing can be paid) and if required, then there could be no Remiſſion without it, which is as much as to ſay it was Neceſſary. So that the Truth of Chriſt's Satisfaction being once granted, its own Nature, without being beholden to other Arguments, will infer the Neceſſity of it, which therefore upon what Account thoſe ſhould deny who grant the Truth of it (unleſs it be to gratify the *Socinians* by giving up as much of the Cauſe as they poſſibly can) I do not underſtand. But this I think to be a very dangerous Complement, and ſuch as will not fail to betray the Cauſe, unleſs our Adverſaries pleaſe to be ſo Civil too as not to take the Advantage. I ſhall not Charge any with ſuch an inſidious deſign as to intend to betray that Cauſe which they pretend to Aſſert, but this I will be bold to ſay, that for my own part I ſhould not undertake to Diſpute with a *Socinian* upon that Conceſſion, being verily perſwaded that if I once granted him that the Satisfaction of Chriſt was not *Neceſſary*, it muſt be *his* Fault if he did not force me to confeſs that it was not *True*.

But not to inſiſt any longer upon this Occaſional Remark concerning the *Truth* and the *Neceſſity* of the Satisfaction of Chriſt (which I here conſider not according to their abſolute and ſeparate Natures, but only as they relate to each other) I

pass now to State the Extent of it, by shewing how far Christ has satisfy'd for us, or how far and in what Sense God is said here to be pleased with us, or reconciled to us in his Son. *This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* Well pleased sounds very high, and can import no less than a full and thorough Satisfaction, that we are fully and perfectly reconciled to God in Jesus Christ. And so the Scripture every where expresses it. In Conformity to which our Church says in the Prayer of Consecration, speaking concerning the Death of Christ upon the Cross, that *he made there by his one Oblation of himself once offer'd, a full, perfect and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World.* Sufficient no doubt as far as was intended; but the great Question is how far or to what degree that was? Upon the right Resolution of which Question the general Idea of *Practical Christianity* will in great Measure depend.

Some extend the Satisfaction of Christ so far as to make actual Pardon the immediate Effect of it, as if we were *ipso facto* deliver'd by his Dying for us, which is what they understand by the *Redemption* of the World. But this at first view appears to be a false Hypothesis, because then as many would be Pardon'd as Christ died for, that is all Men, and that without any thing to be done by way of Condition on their part, which would at one blow dissolve all the Obligations of Good Life, and intirely defeat the *Great Mistery of Godliness.* But because this Mistake is founded upon another concerning the Sufferings of Christ, whom these Men will have to have undergone all the Punishment that was due to our Sins, and so in the very extremity of the Notion to have paid the *Last Farthing*

for us, I think it Neceſſary to conſider a little the Nature of Chriſt's Sufferings, and that the rather becauſe till it be known what that was which Chriſt Suffer'd *for* us, we cannot well determine what the Advantage is which thence accrues *to* us.

There are (as I have already hinted) who thinking they can never enough Exalt the Paſſion of Chriſt, will have him to have Suffer'd, not only for us, and in our Room, but the very ſelf-ſame that we were to have done, and deſerv'd to do, and ſo to have paid a rigid Satisfaction to the Divine Juſtice. But it is evident that Chriſt neither did nor could thus Suffer for us. That he *did* not is plain becauſe his Sufferings were *Temporary*, whereas ours ought to have been *Eternal*. And that he *could* not is as plain, not only from his incapacity of ſuffering Damnation, which in the Nature of it involves Deſperation; but alſo becauſe had his Sufferings been in all other reſpects never ſo much the ſame with ours, yet their being undergone not by us, but by another in our Room, was enough to hinder what he underwent from being the very ſame that the Law required. For (to uſe the Words of a very Learned Perſon upon this Occaſion) *that takes no notice of any other than the Perſons who had Sinn'd, and if a Mediator could have paid the ſame, the Original Law muſt have been Disjunctive*, viz. *that either the Offender muſt Suffer, or another for him. But then the Goſpel had not been the bringing in of a Better Covenant, but a performance of the old.* The Force of which comes to this, that ſince the Original Law did not admit of a Mediator (as not being Disjunctive) though we ſhould ſuppoſe the Puniſhment of Chriſt to have been

Reaſon of the Sufferings of Chriſt.

been otherwiſe never ſo much the ſame with what we were to have undergone, yet its not being undergone by us but by another for us, the very *Commutatio Perſonæ* was enough to make it to be a Puniſhment of a different Nature from that which was required by the Law, whereof the very admiſſion of a Mediator was a Relaxation, and indeed the Firſt Act of God's Indulgence whereby he departed from the Rigour of the Legal Sentence, which yet could not be ſaid to be *Moderated* if Chriſt had ſo rigorouſly ſatisfy'd the Demands of it as ſome Imagine. Beſides that if he had done ſo, God could not have *refuſed* ſuch a Satisfaction, conſequently Pardon and Juſtification muſt have follow'd upon it *ipſo facto*, immediately. Nor could our Deliverance have been ſuſpended (as we ſee it is) upon any Conditions; nor laſtly could God have forgiven us any thing as of *Grace*. All which being true Conſequences, but falſe Propoſitions, 'tis moſt unqueſtionably certain that Chriſt did not ſuffer that very Puniſhment which the Law required, and which, for any Proviſion therein made to the contrary ought to have been inflicted.

If it be ask't what it was then which he ſuffered? I anſwer, that if the Queſtion be concerning the preciſe Quality and Quantity of the Puniſhment, I muſt profeſs Ingenuouſly that I cannot tell. What the Ingredients of his Bitter Cup were, *God* that *mix'd* them, and *himſelf* that *drank* them only know, though we have reaſon to think that it was no ordinary Infliction that could overwhelm his Soul with ſuch a Flood of Sorrow, diſſolve his Body into a Sweat of Blood, and at laſt extort that ſtrange Exclamation from him, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me.* More particular I dare

not be, nor is it neceſſary I ſhould, it being ſufficient for the preſent purpoſe to conclude that whatever his Sufferings were they were not the very ſame that the Law required from the Tranſgreſſors of it, but only ſomething that in a *Judicial* Eſtimation was *Equivalent* to that Puniſhment which was due from them. He is ſaid indeed to have *born our Griefs*, and *carried our Sorrows*, *Iſa.* 53. 4. not that they were the very ſame that we deſerv'd (for we deſerv d Greater) but only ſuch as were undertaken upon our Account, would anſwer the Demands of Juſtice, and all the Reaſons and Ends of Puniſhment full as well, and were truly Equivalent to them; what was wanting in the Duration or Degree of them being abundantly ſupplied from the Quality and Dignity of the *Patient*, whoſe Divinity gave Infinite value to his otherwiſe Finite and Momentary Sufferings, and made his Blood Infinitely more Precious than the Richeſt Treaſures. According to what Saint *Peter* ſays of it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19. *that we were not redeemed with Corruptible things as Silver or Gold, but with the* Precious *Blood of Jeſus Chriſt.*

But as *Precious* as it was, it was not the very thing that the Law required, but a *Vicarious* Puniſhment, not a rigid Satisfaction, but an *Equivalency.* From whence it will follow that it was abſolutely *Refuſable*, all Diſpenſation being of Liberty, not of Neceſſity. And ſince it was refuſable, then as God might not have admitted it, ſo when he did, it was ſtill at his Pleaſure how far he would do ſo, and with what Conditions he would have it qualify'd. For this is moſt certain that what God might wholly have refuſed, he might qualify and limit as he pleaſed. Whence we may further conclude

clude that actual Remiſſion could not be the *Neceſſary* Effect of Chriſt's Satisfaction, nay, that it could have no Neceſſary Effect in reſpect of *us*, but that as to *us* it was all over Arbitrary, and did wholly depend upon the good Pleaſure of God. I ſay as to *us*. For indeed in reſpect of *God* it had *One* Neceſſary and Inſeparable Effect, which was that he might now ſhew Mercy if he pleaſed, and that he had it now in his Power (I ſpeak of a *Moral* not Phyſical Power) to Forgive Sin, all Bars and Impediments being now removed out of the way, which either from his Juſtice or Wiſdom might be oppoſed againſt it. God therefore was now at full Liberty and had a ſufficient Moral Ability to ſhew Mercy, but whether he would or no, and upon what Terms, muſt ſtill depend upon his own Will and Pleaſure. For ſince Chriſt ſatisfy'd by his Sufferings, and ſince thoſe Sufferings were abſolutely refuſable, as not being the very ſame which the Law demanded, it muſt be that his Satisfaction, which was founded upon thoſe Sufferings, muſt be as refuſable too, and if admitted, muſt owe its Succeſs to the gracious Acceptance of God, whoſe juſt Right accordingly it was to order its Effect, and to determine as he ſaw fit, how far the Benefit of it ſhould extend. From all which we may gather this Propoſition which may ſerve as a General Meaſure in order to the reſolution of our preſent Queſtion, *That the Satisfaction of Chriſt has, as to* us, *no other Effect than what it pleaſed God it ſhould have*, or, *That it extends no further than 'twas the Will and Pleaſure of God it ſhould Extend.*

We have therefore now only to Conſider what the *Will* and *Pleaſure* of God was in this matter.

Now to open us a Paſſage into this we have a Double Key.

1. By Conſidering what the End and Deſign of Chriſt was in his Undertaking for us.
2. What the Scripture (wherein is Reveal'd the *Will* of God) expreſly makes to be the Effect of that Undertaking.

And Firſt, There can be no better way to Meaſure the Extent of Chriſt's Undertaking for us, than to Conſider what was his End in that Undertaking, ſince the End of any Performance is that which muſt preſcribe bounds to all that is done in it. This is Clear. Now as to the End of Chriſt's Undertaking we need not put our ſelves upon any Conjectural Reaſonings or Divinations, ſince the Scripture is plain and expreſs that it was for the Aboliſhment of Sin, and for the Promotion and Improvement of Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs. So St. *John* expreſly, *For this purpoſe the Son of God was manifeſted that he might deſtroy the Works of the Devil.* 1 Joh. 3. 8. Which is equally confirm'd by the Authority of St. *Paul*, who tells us, that *he died for all, that they which live ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him which died for them.* 2 Cor. 5. 15. And again, that *he gave himſelf for our Sins, that he might deliver us from this preſent evil World.* Gal. 1. 4. And again, that *Chriſt gave himſelf for his Church, that he might ſanctify and cleanſe it, and that he might preſent it unto himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or* Eph. 5. 25, 26, 27.

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any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. And again, if it be possible, more fully and clearly, *Tit.* 2. 14. that *he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good works.* I need alledge no more Scriptures, since by these it undeniably appears that the End of Christ's Undertaking for us was the Promotion of Holiness, but if you will have a Testimony from his own Mouth, he himself tells us (who to be sure understood the true design of his coming into the World) that *he came to call Sinners to Repentance.* Well if so, then the Effect of Christ's Satisfaction must be extended no further than it may serve to this End, no further than it may tend to the incouragement and furtherance of *Repentance.* Whenever it is made to cross this End 'tis a sure sign that 'tis stated amiss. Now to this there are two hindrances. 1. When it is in *Vain.* 2. When it is *Needless.* When either Pardon of Sin cannot be had with it, or when it may be had without it. Both which are equal as well as sufficient Discouragements to Repentance. Now the First of these was the Condition we were left in by our falling into Sin, and in which the Mercy and Grace of God found us. Though we could have Repented, it would have been in Vain, and to no purpose, Repentance alone without Satisfaction not being sufficient for Pardon. Man therefore in this Supposition had no reason to Repent, and consequently would not endeavour it, being destitute of *Motive* as well as of *Power.* Which was therefore a State utterly desperate, much like that of Hell, wholly forsaken of all Motives to Goodness, and Seal'd up and Condemn'd to all Wickedness. Here there-

fore was extreme need of a *Deliverer*. But then if this Deliverer to Remedy the diſtreſs of this State ſhould interpoſe ſo far as to carry it to the other extreme, by making our Repentance as much Needleſs by his Mediation, as without it, it would have been in Vain, this would equally Croſs and Defeat the Ends of Holineſs, and Conſequently be an equal Contradiction to his Great Deſign. 'Tis neceſſary therefore to fix the Effect of Chriſt's Satisfaction between theſe two. We muſt ſuppoſe him to have done ſo much for us that Repentance may no longer be in Vain, and yet not ſo much as on the other hand to make it needleſs. But now this cannot be by ſuppoſing Actual Pardon to be the immediate Reſult of Chriſt's Satisfaction, for then 'tis viſible that Repentance would be altogether Needleſs, as every Means is when the End is already obtain'd. It muſt be therefore only a *Capacity* of Pardon; not an abſolute and remote Capacity (for that we had before, and without the help of a Mediator) but a Capacity of Pardon upon *Repentance*, which is enough that Repentance may not be in vain, and yet not ſo much as to make it needleſs. And when the Caſe is brought to this, the great Intereſt of Holineſs (which I have ſhewn to be the End of Chriſt's Undertaking) is juſtly and duely ſerv'd, there being then all the Reaſon and Incouragement to Repentance that both the *Succeſsfulneſs* and the *Neceſſity* of the thing can give. And in this Order and Adjuſtment of things I ſuppoſe to conſiſt the true *Myſtery of Godlineſs*. I conclude therefore that ſince the End of Chriſt's Undertaking as Mediator was the Promotion of Repentance, and ſince the Extent of it muſt be ſuch as Comports with that End, and ſince that End can-

not

not be ſerv'd but by ſtating the Effect of his Satisfaction between the two forementiond Extremes, the true Effect of Chriſt's Satisfaction was to put us *into a Pardonable* State, that whereas before without the Mediation of Chriſt, Repentance would not be available to Pardon, now with it it ſhould. Not that we might be pardon'd without it, but only that we might be pardon'd with it. Leſs than this would have been ſhort of a Deliverance, and more would have been a certain Fruſtration of his Great End. I conclude therefore that this was the very preciſe thing that he did for us, to put us into a Capacity of Pardon, into a pardonable State; that he did ſo much for us that Repentance might not be in Vain, and that he did no more that it might not be Needleſs.

But the Truth of this Account will appear Secondly, by Scripture, as well as from the End and Deſign of our Lord's Undertaking and Mediation for us. I argue from all thoſe Scriptures which expreſly ſuſpend our Actual Pardon and Complete Reconciliation with God upon Repentance. For if Actual Pardon be ſuſpended upon Repentance (and I think I need not bring Quotations to prove that it is) then 'tis moſt certain that Actual Pardon is not the immediate Fruit and Effect of Chriſts Satisfaction (ſince that cannot be the *immediate* Effect of any thing which does not follow but by the *Mediation* of certain after Conditions) and if ſo, then Chriſt by his Satisfaction cannot be ſuppoſed to have done more for us than to make Sin *Pardonable*, or to put us into a Capacity of being pardon'd upon Repentance. If he had done more, our Pardon could not have been ſuſpended upon that Condition; but it is ſuſpended upon that Condition,

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whence I juſtly conclude that he did no more. And was not that enough? What, would Men have Chriſt undertake ſo far for them that they might be pardon'd *without* Repentance? Is it not a ſufficient Redemption to be pardon'd *with* it, to have it available? Yes certainly, 'tis more than was indulged to the *Angels* that Sinn'd, and more than the Tenour of the *Law* allows to *Man*, and he is not worthy to have a part in the Redemption of Chriſt who does not think it ſufficient. I conclude therefore that for Chriſt to have ſatisfied for us and redeem'd us is only to have procured for us a Poſſibility of Pardon by Repentance, and for God to be reconciled to us in and through his Son, is for his ſake to admit us into the very next Capacity of Pardon; being ready to beſtow it upon us immediately upon our turning from Sin to him and his Service. So that all thoſe places of Scripture which ſpeak of our being *reconciled* to God by Chriſt, of our being *heal'd* by his Stripes, of our being *Redeem'd* and *Juſtify'd* by his Blood, and of having through it *Forgiveneſs* of Sins and the like, muſt and ought to be underſtood not of *Actual Remiſſion* (as they ſeem to ſound, and as they are taken by ſome) but of a *Remiſſibility* or *State* of Pardon. In which Senſe we are alſo to underſtand that Article of our Creed concerning *Forgiveneſs* of *Sins*. Wherein we profeſs to believe, not that Sin is already pardon'd by the Death of Chriſt (for I know not what Foundation we have for ſuch a Belief) but that he has by the Merit of his Croſs, open'd a way for Pardon and Reconciliation, made them poſſible and attainable by Repentance. So that Sin is ſaid to be pardon'd in as much as 'tis made *Pardonable* by the Merit and Satisfaction of Chriſt,

Chriſt, which is all the Reconciliation that on his part is wrought for us.

But what, is there then a two-fold Reconciliation, one on Chriſt's part, and another on ours? Yes, and 'tis for want of diſtinguiſhing theſe, or at leaſt due attention to this Diſtinction that all the Errour and Confuſion in this Matter has been Occaſion'd. There is certainly a twofold Reconciliation, or, if you will, a twofold Degree of it. The Firſt is previous to our Repentance, and indeed wholly preventive of any thing we can do; the Second follows it, and is grounded upon it. That which is previous to Repentance conſiſts in a bare Remiſſibility of Sin, that which follows it conſiſts in the full and actual Remiſſion of it. The Firſt of theſe is wholly Abſolute and Inconditionate, (there being nothing required of us to make ſin pardonable to us) the Second is ſuſpended upon Conditions, till the performance of which, Sin, though Pardonable, is not however actually pardon'd. In the firſt of theſe we are wholly *Paſſive* and *unconcerned*, it being all over the pure Work of our Redeemer, in the Second we are Active, and muſt come in for a part. Which makes me call one of theſe a Reconciliation on Chriſt's Part, and the other a Reconciliation on ours. Nor is this Diſtinction without Foundation in Scripture, wherein there is expreſs mention of each part of it. That of St. *Paul* to the *Romans*, Rom. 5. 8, 9. *God commendeth his Love towards us in that while we were yet Sinners Chriſt died for us, much more then being juſtified by his Blood we ſhall be ſaved from Wrath through him*, is quoted by a Learned Perſon to this Purpoſe, who will have the former Clauſe to refer to the Firſt Degree

Limbroch Theolog. Chriſtiana. p. 273.

Degree of Reconciliation, and the latter to the Second. But I think he is utterly Miſtaken. For 'tis plain that the Expreſſion of *being juſtified by his Blood*, being immediately oppoſed to that ſtate of Enmity we were in, antecedently to the Mediation of Chriſt, can reach no farther than to the next Degree above it, and conſequently can only ſignify the Firſt and general Reconciliation, that ſtate of Remiſſibility into which we were all put by the Blood of Chriſt, which is alſo upon other Grounds ſhewn to be the Senſe of the Place by the Learned Doctor *Hammond* in his Annotations upon it. But I am not concern'd for the Loſs of this Place, ſince there are two others ſo full and expreſs to the purpoſe that there will be no miſs of its Service. The Firſt is that remarkable one of St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, 2 Cor. 5. 18, 19, 20. *All things are of God who hath reconciled us to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt, and hath given to us the Miniſtry of Reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Chriſt reconciling the World unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of Reconciliation. Now then we are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us; we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead be ye reconciled to God.* Here is a plain Account of a double Reconciliation, one on God's part, that he was reconciling the World to himſelf in Chriſt, and the other on our part, in that we are intreated to be reconciled to God. Which muſt needs be a Reconciliation diſtinct from the Former, becauſe 'tis made the Subject of Perſwaſion and Entreaty, and conſequently ſuppoſed to be matter of Contingency and uncertainty, neither of which can be applied to our Reconciliation as wrought by Chriſt. So again St. *John* ſpeaks of the Firſt Reconciliation,

conciliation, that on Chriſt's part, when he ſays, 1 *Joh.* 2. 2. *If any Man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous. And he is the Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but for the Sins of the whole World.* The univerſality of which Character ſhews it plainly to be meant of the Firſt Reconciliation reſulting immediately from the Death and Satisfaction of Chriſt. The Second he reſpects when he ſays in another place, 1 *Joh.* 1. 7. that *if we walk in the Light as he is in the Light, we have fellowſhip one with another, and the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son Cleanſes us from all Sin.* The *Conditionality* of which ſhews it as truely to be meant of the Second Reconciliation, as the other part by its *Univerſality* is Neceſſarily referr'd to the Firſt. From the Mouth therefore of theſe two Witneſſes St. *Paul* and St. *John*, (not to Summon in any more) I think here is ſufficient Evidence to conclude for a twofold Reconciliation, one on Chriſt's part, and another on ours; and moreover, that that on Chriſt's part does not conſiſt in Actual Pardon or Juſtification, but only in laying the Ground and Foundation of it, in procuring for us not the Poſſeſſion of it, but the Capacity and Poſſibility, which is then reduced to Act, and made Complete, when we put the Conditions upon which it is ſuſpended, when we comply with thoſe terms upon which it was purchaſed by his *Blood*, and is offer'd to us in his *Goſpel*. And in this I think I have given a juſt and clear Account of the Extent of Chriſt's Satisfaction, and ſhewn in what Senſe, and how far God may be ſaid to be Reconciled to us, or Pleaſed with us in his Son; that Beloved Son in whom he declares himſelf well pleaſed, or thoroughly pacify'd, to the greateſt degree of Satisfaction and Acquieſcence.

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From the foregoing Conſiderations concerning the true Extent of the Satisfaction of Chriſt, the firſt Improvement that may be made, is, that they furniſh us with a certain Meaſure whereby to give a deciſive Sentence in that great (though needleſs) Controverſie about *Juſtification by Works*. I ſhall not at preſent ingage in the Debate, having already laid down ſuch Principles upon which the true Iſſue of it will depend For (in ſhort) if all that Chriſt as *Satisfying* has done for us be only to inſtate us in a Capacity of Pardon, then 'tis moſt certain that we are to do all the reſt, all that is further Neceſſary to make this Pardon Perfect and Complete. If Chriſt's part reaches no further than a *Capacity*, then the *Actuality* of this Capacity muſt depend upon our doing the Conditions required, and then to Diſpute whether Repentance be Neceſſary to Juſtification when this Juſtification is ſuppoſed not to be the immediate Effect of Chriſt's Death, but to be ſuſpended upon Repentance as the Condition of it, ſeems to me ſuch an idle, not to ſay *blundering* Controverſie, that one would think the World were hard put to't for ſomething to keep them awake, when this ſhould be made a Queſtion.

Again, We may alſo upon theſe Meaſures return a Clear and Exact Anſwer to that Great *Socinian* Objection, that Chriſt could not die to Reconcile us to God becauſe God was Reconciled to us before, as being ſuppoſed already ſo to love the World as to ſend his only Son to be our Saviour. For the Reconciliation wrought by Chriſt, being, as we have ſtated it, ſuppoſed to conſiſt in a Remiſſibility of Sin upon Repentance, 'tis plain that God was not *ſo* Reconciled to us before. For as this

this is a Degree of Reconciliation leſs than that Actual Pardon which is obtain'd by Repentance, ſo 'tis more than that General Kindneſs and Good Will which God had for us as Creatures, and which moved him to ſend his Son to Die for us. To form a clear Idea of this Matter, we need only diſtinguiſh of a Threefold Degree in the Love of God. One Degree whereby he loved us as Creatures, concerning which St. *John*, *God ſo loved the World*, &c. Another Degree whereby he ſtood yet more kindly affected towards us as inſtated in a Capacity of Pardon by the Satisfaction of his Son. And a Third as actually Pardon'd, and fully Reconciled to him by being qualify'd according to the Conditions required to that Purpoſe. Now as the Third of theſe is greater than the Second, ſo the Second (which we ſuppoſe to be the Effect of Chriſt's Death) is as much greater than the Firſt. And ſince this Second Degree does not Commence till after the Satisfaction of Chriſt, as the Third does not till after the Conditions are perform'd, it is plain that this Second Degree of Love, which is the Effect of the Death of Chriſt, is not the ſame with that which was the Impulſive Cauſe of it, and conſequently that the Death of Chriſt was not (as the *Socinian* pretends) unneceſſary to procure it.

The laſt Improvement I ſhall make of this Diſcourſe, is, that ſince Chriſt has ſo far undertaken for us, as to make way for Second Thoughts, by procuring for us a Capacity of Pardon upon Terms worthy of his Wiſdom, Juſtice and Holineſs, ſince he has retriev'd our once deſperate Fortune, ſet up again our Broken and *Bankrupt* Nature, put Heaven once more in our Reach, removed the Guardian Sword from the Gate of Paradiſe, and brought

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us ſo nigh to the Kingdom of God, that there wants nothing but our contributing our part, that we may enter and take Poſſeſſion of it. I ſay, that ſince our Saviour Chriſt has done all this for us, we would Learn to admire the Grace and Goodneſs of God towards us, thankfully receive ſo ineſtimable a Benefit, and alſo faithfully endeavour to fulfil the Conditions required on our part, in order to the Completion of our Happineſs. That ſo from a *Capacity* of Pardon we may paſs on to the *Actual* Poſſeſſion of it, that our Peace and Reconciliation with God may be on both ſides Perfect and Intire, that he may Delight and be Satisfy'd *in* us, as well as *for* us, and may ſay of every one of us as he did of him that undertook for us, *This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed.* Amen.

A Diſ-

A Diſcourſe Concerning Practical Atheiſm.

TIT. j. 16.

They profeſs that they know God, but in Works they deny him.

THE true Character of a *Practical Atheiſt*, who does not, as the Notional one, expreſly deny the Being of God and ridicule the Belief of him, who does not Charge them with Weakneſs that plead for his Exiſtence, and them yet with greater that ſerve him, and live under an aweful Senſe of him, expoſe the Myſteries of Faith as Impoſſibilities, and the Rule of it as a mere Human Invention, deride the Notion of an after State as the Dreams of the Night, and repreſent Heaven and Hell as imaginary Scenes, and ſo with one Breath blow away all Religion as the Trick and Device of the crafty, and the vain Amuſement of Eaſy and Credulous Spirits. No, he profeſſes to believe that there is a God, and ſeems concern'd that others ſhould believe it too, and accordingly you ſhall often hear him Diſcourſe of the Reaſonableneſs of ſuch a Belief, and if he has Learning to his Zeal, you ſhall have him it may be write Books for the proof of a Deity,

and to ſhew the unreaſonableneſs of Atheiſm, all along Lamenting and Complaining that there ſhould be any occaſion for it, and ſometimes in the height and fulneſs of his Zeal, (ſo ſtrongly is the Man perſwaded himſelf) queſtioning whether there be any ſuch thing as a real Atheiſt in the World. Nay, he profeſſes not only to Believe a God, but to *Know* him; to be ſo well acquainted with his Nature and with his Will, with his Works and with his Ways, nay, and with his very Decrees, as if he had obtain'd not only *Moſes*'s *Sight*, but his *Wiſh*, and had ſeen not the Back-parts only, but the Face of God. Nor is he content to ſit down with bare Deiſm, but with a God acknowledges both Providence and a Reveal'd Religion, and particularly the Chriſtian, as the only one that can juſtly pretend to the Faith of a Reaſonable Creature, and that is at once worthy of both God and Man. Nor is he only a Chriſtian at large, and to himſelf, but Communicates with his Fellow-Chriſtians, and becauſe he cannot do ſo with all of them, joyns himſelf to a particular Society of Chriſtians, ſuch as is ſuppoſed to be a pure and ſound part of the Catholick Church; with them he Communicates in all the Externals of Religion, and is very Zealous and Conformable in his Way, very Sound and Orthodox in all Points, conceiving as rightly both of the *Myſteries* and of the *Morals* of the Goſpel as any Man in the World, and as ready to maintain the Truths of it, as far as Words or Writing will go, againſt any that ſhall either deny or miſrepreſent them. I ſay as far as Words or Writing will go, for you are very much miſtaken in the Man if you expect he ſhould be a Martyr for the God or the Religion he profeſſes;

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ſo far is he from *Dying for* it, that he does not ſo much as *Live* according *to* it. With all his Faith and Knowledge and his high Pretenſions to both, you will find him as looſe and diſorderly in his Manners as if he believ'd nothing of what he profeſſes, or as any of thoſe who are declared Infidels. He has an Angel's Form and Voice, but a Devil's *Foot*, breaks the 5 Commandments with a Sound Creed, and Marches on in the Way to Hell, with Directions to Heaven in his Hand. For indeed his Divinity lies only in his Head, and though his Tongue number him among the Faithful, his Life is all over *Infidel*. And here he ſtrikes hands with the Atheiſt again, walks with him in the ſame Road, though Diſputing againſt him as he goes. He diſavows his Principle, but conſpires with him in his Intention, and moſt effectually does his Work, and will no doubt ſhare with him in his Wages. Such Men there were even in the Firſt and Beſt Days of the Church, and I am afraid a great many more ſuch Now to whom this Character of the Apoſtle's is the beſt that belongs, *They profeſs that they know God*, but in Works *they deny him*.

Whether the Apoſtle intends this of the *Jewiſh* falſe Teachers who though they profeſs'd to know and believe the One Living and True God, yet lived like Atheiſts, in as perfect a Contradiction to his Will as if there were no God, or as any of the Gentiles who were Ἄθεοι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ *without God in the World*, in Alluſion to what is ſaid, *Rom.* 2. 17. *Behold thou art called a Jew, and reſteſt in the Law, and makeſt thy boaſt of God, and knoweſt his Will*, &c. Or whether he had the *Gnoſtics* in his View, who pretended to great Knowledge of God and Divine Matters, but liv'd Profane and Impious

Lives, and with all their Sublime and Lofty Theories were no better than Atheiſts in their Practice, I ſhall not think it a Queſtion of that Moment as to ſpend any time in the Reſolution of it, but taking the Words as a General Propoſition applicable to all Ages and Places of the World, as in which a Good Faith or Profeſſion and an ill Life Meet together (the two Strange Ingredients that go to the Compoſition of Practical Atheiſm) ſhall oblige my ſelf to the Conſideration of the following Particulars.

Firſt, That the profeſs'd Belief of a Deity is Conſiſtent with an ill Life, or, that thoſe who Profeſs to believe the Being of a God, may and do often lead ill Lives.

Secondly, That an ill Life is a real Denial of God, or, that thoſe who lead wicked Lives do really Deny that God whom they otherwiſe Profeſs.

Thirdly, I ſhall Mark out ſome Particular Vices and Vicious Practices which are in a more Eminent Manner Denials of God.

Concerning the Firſt of theſe, that the Profeſs'd Belief of a Deity is Conſiſtent with an ill Life, I need not ſay much, becauſe 'tis what we all know by viſible Experience, and that ſo well, that there is more need to Lament a Truth that reflects ſo much upon the Reaſon of Mankind, and is ſuch a ſtanding Shame and Reproach to our Natures, than to have it further laid open. But not to let this part go without a little Reflection, we may conſider that though the External Profeſſion of a God (whether he be believ'd or no) be a conſiderable reſtraint upon

upon Mankind, and an Inſtrument of Publick Order in the World, yet this does not neceſſarily carry along with it an inward Senſe of Religion, nor a true Regularity of Life and Converſation. It will indeed keep up the *Form* of Religion (for otherwiſe how ſhall even the Profeſſion of it ſtand) but it may be ſtill a dead, empty Form, without any thing of the Power and Life of Godlineſs, and Men may lead very ill Lives, while they make Profeſſion of all thoſe great things that *ſhould*, and (if ſoundly believ'd) *would* certainly ingage them in the contrary Practice. For 'tis in the firſt place very poſſible that he who outwardly profeſſes the Belief of a God, may in his Heart believe no ſuch thing. He may with great Formality ſtand up at the Creed, and bow at the Name of *Jeſus* too, and yet be one of thoſe Fools that ſay in their Hearts *there is no God*, and then what will his Profeſſion of the contrary ſignify towards the due Government of his Life! It may indeed put him upon a few Formalities and External Decencies, ſo far as is neceſſary to act the Part and keep up the Character of a *Profeſſor*, but it can carry him no further; and if the Man does go further, it is not by the force of this, but of ſome other Principle. But ſuppoſe he that profeſſes does alſo *Believe* a God, yet he may form ſuch wrong Conceptions of him as may be ſo far from deriving any good influence upon his Actions, that they may ſerve to corrupt and diſorder them. He may think with the *Epicurean*, that God is an Idle, unactive Being, that ſo Centers in himſelf as to mind nothing but his own Repoſe, and the Recollected Injoyment of his own Fulneſs, or if he allow him to have regard for any thing out of himſelf, yet he

may fancy him to be either ſo Soft and Eaſy, ſo Fond and Indulgent, ſo all made up of Goodneſs and Sweetneſs, as that he will not Reſent or Puniſh the greateſt Contempts of his Authority and Violations of his Law; or on the other ſide ſo Peeviſh and Difficult, ſo over-Rigid and Severe that he will bear with nothing, forgive nothing, accept nothing, make no allowances, but take advantage of the leaſt Slips and Failures, and puniſh Men Eternally for them, though they are never ſo Sincere in their Intentions, and never ſo hearty in their Endeavours to pleaſe him. Or if he does not think either of theſe Characters to belong to the General Nature of God, yet he may aſcribe both at once to him in relation to particular Perſons, imagining him ſo fond and partially kind to ſome few happy Favorites as to decree them abſolutely to Salvation from all Eternity, and accordingly in Time to ſee no Hurt or Evil in them, but to be blind to all their Faults and Irregularities, when at the ſame time he is ſuppoſed to be ſo unaccountably prejudic'd againſt all the reſt as to deſtine them to Ruin and Deſtruction by a Decree equally Abſolute and Irreverſible. Theſe and many other ſuch wrong Conceptions of God may he that Profeſſes the Belief of him Entertain, which may render that Belief altogether as ineffectual towards the well-ordering of his Life, as if he were without God in the World. But ſuppoſe him not only to believe a God, but to think rightly of him too, yet after all he may yield ſo little actual *Attention* to this his habitual Belief and Knowledge, he may ſo ſeldom think upon God, and ſo little Conſider what he Believes and thinks of him, as ſtill to lead an ill Life, and detain this Great and Fundamental Truth

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in Unrighteousness. St. *Paul* tells us, *Rom.* 1. 18. that the *Heathen* did so: They stifled and Imprison'd the Divine Light (those Common Notices and Principles they had of God) in their Minds, and suffer'd it not to break forth and display it self so as to Influence their Lives and Actions. And hence it came to pass, *ver.* 22. that tho' *they knew God*, yet *they glorified him not as God*, did not pay him that Homage that was due to him, nor serve him in such a Manner as was worthy of him. And the like we may easily presume, and by sad Experience find too true in *Christians*, who though they have a more Shining Light to walk by than the Heathen had, know more of God and of their Duty towards him, yet may give as little Attention to their Greater as the other did to their Lesser Light, and so for want of having their Eyes open, may stumble as much, and wander as often by *Day*, as the other did by *Night*. The thing that I plainly intend is this; 'Tis a very possible, and indeed a very Ordinary thing for Men not to Consider and not to attend to the Consequences of what they Believe and Know (there are so many Passions within, and so many sensible Impressions without to divert them from it) and when they do so 'tis all one for that time as if they did neither Believe nor Know, and they stand upon the same Level with *Infidels* and *Ignorant* Persons, and will not act one jot wiser or better than they do, the want of Consideration alone being enough to frustrate all the Effects of their Faith and Knowledge in order to a good Life. For let a Man Believe never so much or Know never so much of the Existence, Nature and Will of God, yet he has the *Use* and *Benefit* of that Faith and Knowledge no longer and

no further then he actually attends to and exerts them; as let a Traveller's Eye-ſight be never ſo good, it ſerves him however for Direction no longer than he keeps his Eyes open and intent upon his Way, and if he ſhut them, 'tis not his general Habit or Power of Seeing that will keep him from Miſtakes and Wandrings. If the Light be not preſent to him for ready uſe when he is to walk by it, 'tis all one as if it were at the other ſide of the Hemiſphere, he could but be in the Dark then, and ſo he is now. For he has it not to order his Motions by it, though he has it; and ſo the *Traveller* is Blind, though the *Man* ſees. The Application of this to Morality is very Eaſy, and therefore ſince he that Profeſſes the Belief of a God may not Conſider what is contain'd in that Belief, nor maintain in his Mind a preſent actual Senſe of it, how Fundamental a Principle ſoever that may be, and in it ſelf productive of good Living, yet for want of this actual Senſe of what he habitually and in the general believes it may prove a mere nothing to him, and he may Live and Act as diſorderly as if he acknowledged no ſuch Principle. And when he does ſo, we may argue as well backwards from his ill Practice, to the want of his Actual Belief, as we did before from the want of his Actual Belief to his ill Practice. Which opens us an Entrance upon the Second thing propoſed.

Secondly, *That an Ill Life is a real Denial of God*, or, *That thoſe who lead Wicked Lives do really Deny That God whom they otherwiſe profeſs.* For ſo the Apoſtle expreſly, *They profeſs that they know God, but in works they deny him.* Theſe Works to be ſure are ill Works, being ſet in Oppoſition to the Profeſſion of God, which accordingly has laid us a

ground

ground for the Firſt Propoſition, *That the Profeſs'd Belief of a Deity is Conſiſtent with an ill Life.* We have now in the next place the true Natural Value and Import of theſe Works, what they ſignify, and by Neceſſary Conſtruction amount to, which it ſeems is no leſs than a Denial of God. *In Works they deny him.*

By which I do not mean (nor do I ſuppoſe does the Apoſtle) that he that Lives an ill Life muſt Neceſſarily in his General and Habitual Judgment hold that there is no God. For that were to Confound the *Practical* with the *Speculative* Atheiſt, which need not be, ſince, as has been ſhewn already, not only the Profeſſion, but even the Belief of a God may upon other Accounts be Conſiſtent with a Courſe of Ill Living. Nor do I mean that there is any Neceſſity that our Ill Liver ſhould by way of Poſitive Judgment, ſo much as *Actually* pronounce within himſelf that there is no God. 'Tis enough if he do not actually Believe and Conſider that there is one, that alone being ſufficient to fruſtrate and put by all the Influence and Efficacy of his General Belief, and to lay him open to the Aſſaults of the Tempter. When therefore, I ſay, That an Ill Life is a Denial of God, my meaning preciſely is, that all Ill Livers do by their Actions plainly declare that either they do not thoroughly Believe that there is a God, but are Atheiſts in their Hearts, whatever they may pretend or profeſs to the World, or at leaſt that they have not a preſent Senſe of their Belief, and do not Actually Conſider that there is a God. They either are not really convinc'd and perſwaded of that Fundamental Truth, or elſe they do not duely attend to it; they are either under the *Habit*, or under the *Act* of Infi-

delity,

delity, which as it may very properly be call'd during the time that it laſts, a *Denial* of God, ſo 'tis that which the ill Life of any Man will juſtly warrant us to Conclude of him.

'Tis moſt certain in the General, that all Defect in *Practice* proceeds from, and therefore argues ſome Defect in *Theory*. For it being Neceſſary that a Man ſhould Will as at that Inſtant he Thinks, however it may be againſt his Habitual Judgment; (ſince otherwiſe he would Will what then appears to him not to be Eligible, which would be to Will Evil as Evil) if he Wills amiſs 'tis plain that he muſt alſo Think amiſs, and that there is an Errour in his Underſtanding as well as in his Will. *If any man walk in the day*, ſays our Saviour, *he ſtumbleth not, becauſe he ſeeth the light of this World. But if a man walk in the night, he ſtumbleth, becauſe there is no light in him. John* 11.9. This is true in a Spiritual and Myſtical Senſe as well as in the Natural. A well inform'd Underſtanding keeps all the Motions of the Will true and regular, but Ignorance and Miſtake will be ſure to pervert them. And as the Night makes a Man Stumble, ſo from his Stumbling we may conclude that he walks in the Night. Whoever Sins is Ignorant of ſomething or other which he ſhould know, and if not wholly deſtitute of Light, has at leaſt ſome Darkneſs in him. Either he is not ſufficiently inſtructed in his Duty, ſo as to know in general that ſuch an Action is a Sin, or elſe he does not think it at the very Inſtant to be ſo, or he does not (perhaps Habitually, however to be ſure Actually) think Sin to be the greateſt Evil; but that 'tis better to Commit it than to be without ſuch a *Pleaſure*, or ſuch an *Intereſt*, the want of which in the Hurry of his Paſſion he imagines to be the

the greater Evil of the two. Or it may be he does not ſufficiently conſider the Conſequences of Sin, nor the great Motives and Ingagements to Obedience, which are ſo weighty and momentous in themſelves that they need only be conſider'd to make them Effectual. Or he flatters himſelf with Hopes of Impunityuponthe account either of God's Mercy, or Human Frailty,or the violence of the Temptation, or of the Number of thoſe who offend with him. Or poſſibly he boldly Ventures upon Sin with a deluding proſpect of Repenting for it afterwards, and that it may be after he has for a long time indulged himſelf in the Practice of it, not conſidering the Certainty of Death, nor the uncertainty of Life, nor the inviſible Periods of the Divine Grace, nor the Stings of an awaken'd Conſcience, nor the Terrours of the Laſt Judgment, nor the two Great Eternities. Some Practical Truth or other he is ignorant of, or, which comes to the ſame, has not in his View. For if a Man could Sin with all theſe Conſiderations quick and freſh about him, what is there left that ſhould ever make him Repent? For 'tis the Recovery of theſe Thoughts that muſt put him upon it. But if theſe very Thoughts can conſiſt with a Courſe of Sinning, the Man muſt e'ne go on in it for ever, there being then no handle left in him for Repentance to take hold of. We muſt therefore conclude that our Sinner walk't in the Dark when he Stumbled and Miſs'd his Way, that either he had no Light with him, or that it fail'd him by ſome ſudden *Eclipſe*; that either he had not ſo much as an Habitual Knowledge of the moſt Concerning and Important Truths of Morality, or at leaſt that the Eye of his Mind was turn'd off from the Actual

View

View of them. That is in ſhort, that either he did not *Underſtand*, or that he did not *Conſider*.

And as this is true in the General, that want of Light is the Cauſe of Men's Stumbling, and that all diſorder in Will and Practice argues ſome Defect and Miſtake in Judgment, according to what the Scripture ſays of the Firſt Sinner, 1 *Tim.* 2. 14. *The Woman being deceiv'd was in the Tranſgreſſion*, ſo does it particularly argue ſome Defect or other, either Habitual or Actual, in the Belief of that Great Fundamental Principle, the Exiſtence of a God, which either is not Cordially and thoroughly receiv'd, or at leaſt not duely conſider'd and attended to by thoſe who preſume to offend and diſobey him. Infidelity of ſome ſort or ſome Degree or other is at the Bottom of all Sin, and lurks ſecretly in the Hearts of all Sinners. They either do not with a full Conviction and Perſwaſion believe that there is a God, but have ſome hidden reſerves of Suſpicion and Miſtruſt, ſome Sceptical Doubts and Irreſolutions about it, even when they ſeem to be moſt Confident of it, and Zealous for it; or elſe they do not keep up in their Minds a lively Senſe and Recollection of that Thought, nor with due Application conſider that there is really ſuch an awful Being in the World. Or they do not ſufficiently attend to the Conſequences of this Faith; or they do not mind what it includes, nor diſtinctly conſider what it is that they believe in believing a God, nor take aſunder and examine the ſeveral Articles of this their grand Creed, but ſwallow it down whole and in groſs, without either Chewing or Digeſting it, and then no wonder if like a Medicine wrapt up in an indiſſolvible *Vehicle* it goes through them without any Operation.

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In ſhort, either they have not truly and ſincerely in them this General Faith, that God is, or it lies dormant in them, and they do not live under an awaken'd Senſe of it. Either God is not in all their Thoughts, or at leaſt not in thoſe with which they act, and by which their Actions are govern'd.

And all this they do as good as declare by their Wicked Practices, let their other Declarations and Pretences be what they will. For did Men heartily and thoroughly Believe the Exiſtence of a God, I ſay thoroughly, with as firm and unſhaken a Perſwaſion as they believe there is a Sun that ſhines upon them, or a King that Rules over them, and did they actually and ſeriouſly weigh and conſider with themſelves what they believ'd, did this Truth lie open and bare to their Minds, were their Eyes intent upon it, were it preſent to them, as preſent as the Thought of their own Being is when they ſee themſelves in a Glaſs, or as the Thoughts of Death are to a Malefactor when he ſees and feels the Rope about his Neck, is it poſſible that they ſhould be ſo Wicked as they are, and lead ſuch Immoral and Irreligious Lives as they do? No certainly, this is ſuch a Mighty Idea, ſuch a vaſt and pregnant Thought as would fill and wholly ingage their Minds, bear down their Wills, be an effectual Reſtraint upon all their Motions, and ſuch as would not fail to keep them within the Bounds of their Duty. Not that I think it ſuch an Infallible Security to any Man's Practice barely to whiſper to his Soul, *There is a God*, (for 'tis not to be imagin'd that this Sacred Name ſhould be as a *Charm* or *Spell*, that the very Mention of it ſhould drive away the Devil and his Temptations) but that when this Great Thought comes to be open'd and unbowell'd,

unbowell'd, to be unravell'd and laid bare, there are ſuch Momentous Truths inclos'd in it as muſt needs ſtrike ſuch an awful Impreſſion into the Spirit of the Serious Conſiderer, as to preſerve him from tranſgreſſing his Duty. For to think there is a God is in more Words to think that there is a Being Infinitely Great and Infinitely Good, of the moſt perfect Juſtice, Wiſdom and Power, able to beſtow the greateſt Happineſs upon thoſe that Serve and Obey him, and to inflict the utmoſt Miſery upon Diſobedient and Rebellious Spirits, that is preſent in every place and to every thing, that ſees every Motion and every Thought that paſſes in the World, and will hereafter Judge it in Righteouſneſs, that hates Sin Infinitely, and will puniſh it if not Repented of, everlaſtingly. And can a Man Sin with this great and filling Thought before him, and Staring him as it were in the very Face? If he can, I know not what Thoughts thoſe muſt be that ſhall ever bring him to Repent of it. But if he cannot (and it appears by that very Argument, as well as from the Power and Efficacy of the Thought it ſelf that he cannot) we may then juſtly conclude, that if he does preſume to tranſgreſs his Duty, 'tis becauſe he has not a preſent and actual View of this Thought, and does not duely Conſider that there is a God, who is now his *Witneſs*, and will hereafter be his *Judge*. Whereby it plainly appears that Infidelity and Atheiſm lie at the Root of all Sin, and that God is really denied in ſome degree or other by every Worker of Iniquity, let him profeſs and declare to the Contrary as much as he pleaſe. Which juſtifies a certain *Engliſh* Phraſe in a more than ordinary Emphaſis, wherein we uſe to call a Man of a Wicked Life, an *Ungodly*

godly Man. And he deſerves the Name, though we ſhould put it into *Greek*, being as I have ſhewn in ſtrict Reality and Propriety, a *Denier of God.*

And let me tell him that this is the moſt *Effectual* way of Denying him, ſince Mens true inward Sentiments are to be concluded more from what they do, than from what they ſay. A Man may deny the Being of God in Words, only for Argument and Diſcourſe Sake, or out of Levity and Vanity of Humour, to appear a Wit and a Man of Paradoxes; or out of Bravery, to be thought one of a bold daring Spirit, or it may be for Experiment, to try what others will ſay; or the better to recommend himſelf to ſome ſort of Company by ſuch an outward Compliance, though at the ſame time he has Nothing of this in the Bottom of his Judgment. But when a Man ſhall deny him by the whole Tenor of his Life and Manners, 'tis plain that he really Thinks what the other Speaks, and there is more Reaſon why he ſhould be believ'd upon his *Life*, than that the other ſhould upon his *Word*. Nay more than that, he himſelf ſhould be believ'd upon his own word to the Contrary. For the bare Profeſſion of a God is no Convincing Argument that a Man believes a God (though it may be an Argument of *Charity* when nothing appears to Contradict it) ſince Intereſt and Decency may give us a ſufficient account of that Matter. But on the other ſide, a Wicked Life is a plain Demonſtration that a Man *disbelieves* him, at leaſt during his Continuance in it, an ill Liver being, as I have ſhewn, no better than an *Atheiſt for the time being*. Which in ſhort is the true difference between a Practical and a Speculative Atheiſt, the Speculative Atheiſt being in Habit what the Practical one

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is in Act, and the Practical Atheiſt being in Act what the Speculative one is in Habit.

And as a Looſe and Profane Life is the moſt Effectual, ſo 'tis alſo the moſt *Miſchievous* way of denying a Deity. For beſides that few will be ſo uncivil and unmannerly as to ſay in expreſs Terms (whatever they think) that there is no God, whenever any one is ſo hardy as to talk at that rate, 'tis ſuch an intrenchment upon Publick Decency, ſuch a Violation to Common Modeſty, ſuch an Affront to the Natural Senſe of Mankind, that every one is preſently alarm'd at it, and upon his Guard againſt it, and few will believe that the Man ſpeaks in Earneſt, and ſo the Poiſon for want of due Infuſion does but little hurt. But now Wicked Practices inſinuate themſelves by Degrees, and as it were inſenſibly and unawares; and with themſelves that Principle of Infidelity from which they proceed, and of which they carry a very Strong and Contagious Tincture. Whereby it comes to paſs that the Practical, though perhaps not always a worſe Man, may yet do more real *Miſchief* than the Speculative Atheiſt.

However, whether he does or no, he is to be ſure more *Abſurd* and *Inconſiſtent* with himſelf, and more *Self-Condemn'd*. They are indeed both of them Deniers of God, but with this difference, that if the Speculative Atheiſt denies him in Practice, he denies him in Principle too, and ſo is a down-right plain-dealing Sinner; conſiſtent with himſelf, and throughout of a piece: But now the Practical Atheiſt, though he lives altogether as the other does, yet he Profeſſes and Pretends to better Things, and ſo adds *Hypocriſie* to his other Immoralities. As his ill Life is a ſenſible and breathing

Scandal

Scandal to his Profession, so his Profession is a constant upbraiding Objection and Aggravation to his Ill Living, exposing him to the just Censure and Derision, not only of Good Men, but even of his very *Brother Atheist*, who may thus bespeak him, and insult over him. *What an Absurd Self-Inconsistent Creature art thou! I indeed live a Careless and Dissolute Life, but 'tis because I hold no Principle that obliges me to live better; But thou (Fool as thou art) Professest to Believe a God, and yet liv'st as bad as I that hold there is None. As I am, and as I think at present, I have no reason to Change my Course, my Conduct being very Wise if my Supposition be true, but did I really believe what thou pretendest to do, that there is a God, I should think it concern'd me to lead another sort of Life than thou dost, and not to be such a Self-Condemn'd Fool as thou art. I would go on to deride thy Weakness, but that I rather believe thou art at Bottom as very an Infidel as my self, and that all thy Professions to the Contrary, are but mere Shew and Pageantry, something to blind the World, and to Compass some Politick Ends.* Now what can a Wicked Man Reply to this? Unless it be to own the latter part of the Charge, *Heb.* 3. 12. by Confessing that there is indeed a Heart of Unbelief in him departing from the Living God, and so to acquit himself from the Imputation of Absurdity and Self-Inconsistency, by owning that of Atheism and Infidelity; which indeed is in great Measure the Truth of the Case, since, as I have shewn, an ill Life is a real Denial of God, and those who lead Wicked Lives do in Effect deny that God whom they otherwise Profess.

And why then do they Profess him? Nay, why do they so much as take his Venerable Name into

their Polluted Lips, *ſince they hate to be reform'd, and caſt his words behind them?* Why do they ſuffer their Lives thus to give the lie to their Profeſſion, and their Profeſſion thus daily to Reproach and Condemn their Lives? Why do they not either renounce their *Faith* or take more Care of their *Works*? What, to Believe like Chriſtians, and Live like Heathens? Why do they not either throw up their Principle, or reform their Practice? Why are they ſuch a ſtanding, viſible, living Contradiction to themſelves? O the unaccountable Folly and Madneſs of a Wicked Life when 'tis join'd with a good Faith! The ſtrange Abſurdity of ſuch a Sinner, the *Myſtery of his* Iniquity! And yet how many are there that are guilty of it? No fewer than all Ill-Living Chriſtians, though ſome more notoriouſly ſo than others. Which leads me to the Third thing I propoſed, *viz.* To Mark out ſome Particular Vices and Vicious Practices, which are in a more Eminent Manner Denials of God. And among theſe I reckon,

1. *The placing ones End in any Creature*, whether that Creature be ones ſelf or any other Being. He that makes himſelf his End, that Centers and Terminates in himſelf, that refers all things to himſelf, and meaſures all things by the Relation which they have to his own private Perſonal Intereſt, is a Denier of God to ſome purpoſe, and holds one of the Firſt Ranks of Practical Atheiſts. There is indeed only the down-right Idolater before him, though it be a little diſputable to which belongs the Right of Precedency, ſince the Self-Ending, Self-Centring Man does in a very true and proper Senſe Idolize himſelf, by aſſuming to himſelf a Prerogative

rogative which the Infinite God only has, or is Capable of having. He as God ſits in the Temple of God, and is a kind of *Antichriſt* in *Morality*. And ſo again the Man that places his End in any of the Creatures without him in Senſible and Temporal Objects, in the Honour, Pleaſures or Riches of this World, is a very groſs Denier of God, as Deifying and Idolizing thoſe little empty things upon which he thus reſts and repoſes himſelf. Upon which Account it is that the Scripture ſays expreſly of one of theſe Lovers of Creatures, the *Covetous* Man, that he is an *Idolater*. And the ſame is altogether as true of the other two, the Ambitious and Voluptuous. Theſe have their Idols too as well as the Covetous Wretch, though not of Silver and Gold. Their Idolatry is only a little more Refined and Spiritualized. For whoever deſires any thing as his true Good, Deify's that thing, and if that thing be not God, is truly guilty of Idolatry. For God only is the true Good, End and Centre of all Rational Natures, having given them Appetites too large to be ſatisfy'd with any thing leſs than Himſelf. As for other things, they are ſo far from contenting our Paſſion that they do but Inflame it; and inſtead of filling our Heart, do but make the Emptineſs of it wider by their having a Room in it. They are all over falſe and lying Goods, and accordingly promiſed as Rewards by the great Author of Falſhood and Deceit. *All theſe things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worſhip me.* Mat. 4. 9. A Promiſe *wherein* (to uſe an Excellent Remark of the *Port Royal* upon that Text) *the Devil diſcover'd himſelf. Since God has never promiſed theſe falſe Goods to his Ser-*

Abrege de la Morale de L'Evangile. Pag. 25.

vants, but only to Figure and Shadow forth thoſe Goods which are True and Eternal. Now he himſelf is that only True and Eternal Good, for whom we were made, and in whom only we can be Happy, and therefore he that places his End and ſets up his Reſt in any Creature, makes that to be God, and ſo plainly denies him who truly is ſo.

2. *The deſiring that any Creature ſhould place its End in us.* This will eaſily be acknowledged to be another very groſs way of Denying God if it were Practicable, only perhaps it may ſeem too groſs for any to be guilty of it. And indeed there have not been over many (though there want not Inſtances of this Nature) who have let themſelves run up to that Extravagant pitch of Vanity and Impiety as to aſſume to themſelves the Title of Gods, and to have Altars Erected, and Incenſe offer'd to their Honour and Grandeur. He muſt be a Monſter of a Man that can be ſo Sacrilegiouſly Vain as this comes to. But 'tis not ſo very ſtrange to ſee Men deſire that their *Underſtandings* ſhould be the Meaſure of all other Men's, nay, even of Truth it ſelf, not allowing any thing to be true but whoſe Reaſon and Manner they can conceive and adjuſt to their own Minds, though reveal'd even by him who can neither Err nor Deceive. Nor to ſee them deſire that their *Wills* ſhould be the Rule and Standard of other Men's Wills, and accordingly to expect Compliance in all their Humours and Fancies, that others ſhould Love what they Love, and Hate what they Hate. Nor to ſee them willing to ingage Men's Thoughts and Affections upon them, to have Poſſeſſion of their Heads and Hearts, and to have them full of *them* and of their little Concernments.

Nor

Nor is it ſo very ſtrange to ſee them covet to have Men's Praiſe and Admiration, their Applauſes and Acclamations, and to endeavour to turn their Eyes from the Contemplation of God's Excellencies (to whom only Glory and Honour belongs) to the View and Conſideration of their own. Theſe things are no ſuch Rarities, being done and practiſed every Day. Nor is it any ſuch great Wonder that thoſe who can think themſelves worthy of their own Beſt and Soveraign Affection, ſhould deſire to have the ſame place in the Hearts of other Men. But now this is but another way of Seating ones Self as God in the Great Temple of God, the *World*, and receiving the Worſhip and Veneration of our Fellow-Creatures, though they do not ſet up to us Shrines and Altars, nor fall down before us with Incenſe and Sacrifice. To deſire thus to turn the Eye of the Creatures upon our Selves, and to have them ſtand fix't and intent upon us, all ingaged and imploy'd in the Contemplation of our Excellencies, what is it but in a manner to aſſume the place of God in reſpect of them, Firſt to Deify our Selves, and then to Wiſh that others ſhould behave themſelves towards us accordingly, which cannot but be a very Groſs, if only becauſe a *double* Denial of God.

3. *Hypocriſy*. This is a Vice that carries upon it very deep Prints of Atheiſm, is Seaſon'd with a Strong Tincture of Irreligion, and whoſe very Ground and Fundamental *Suppoſition* is Infidelity. There were no ſuch Practical Atheiſts as the Scribes and Phariſees, the Leven of their Hypocriſy was a Leven of Unbelief, and they voided the *Being* of God as much by their *Lives*, as his

Commandments by their *Traditions.* Indeed every Hypocrite is one of thoſe Fools that ſay in their Hearts that there is no God, or at leaſt that he is not Omniſcient enough to be a Searcher of Hearts, and to Know what is Conceiv'd and Entertain'd there. For did he thoroughly believe and ſeriouſly conſider this, he would never Content himſelf with the Form of Godlineſs, demure Looks, long and loud Prayers, and broad Phylacteries; but would Endeavour to enter into the true Spirit and Power of it, and would take care to approve his inward Man to the Eye of God, as well as his outward to the Eyes of the World. This, I ſay, he would do if he had a due Senſe of an All-ſeeing God; but ſince he does otherwiſe, making his Court only to the World, and taking heed only to that part of him which lies open to Human Inſpection, 'tis plain that he is aware of no other Witneſs, that he has in him an Heart of Unbelief (tho' he be commonly a Man all made up of *Faith*) that he ſecretly Denies God, notwithſtanding all his Pretences to *Godlineſs*, and tho' no *Profeſt Atheiſt*, is yet an *Atheiſtical Profeſſor.*

Some other Vices I might ſet down as Chargeable with a more than ordinary Denial of God, ſuch as Blaſphemy, Profane and Irreligious Talking, idle Swearing, Perjury, Witchcraft, *&c.* but after all there is no ſuch Denial of God as *Final Impenitence*, nor ſuch a Practical Atheiſt as the Conſtant Perſevering Sinner, that lives on and dies in his Wicked Courſes. Other Sinners, let their Crimes be what they will, have however their lucid Intervals, ſometimes in the Dark, and ſometimes in the Light, like the ſucceſſive returns of Night and Day. But the Final Impenitent has a

thick

thick Cloud always dwelling upon his Soul, is all over one ſolid impenetrable Maſs of unmingled Darkneſs, like the Chaos before the Birth of Light, a Star ſo ſwallow'd up and all grown over with a Conflux of dark ſpots as never to be able to break through its Obſcure Cruſt, and recover its Native Brightneſs; no longer indeed a Star but a Planet, one of St. *Jude*'s *Wandring* Stars, to whom is reſerv'd the Blackneſs of Darkneſs for ever. In one word, he is ſuch a Practical as very little differs from a Speculative Atheiſt.

Now the uſe that I ſhall make of this whole Diſcourſe is briefly this, that ſince (as you have heard) a Wicked Life is a real Denial of God, we would take the greater Care what Manner of Perſons we are, and what Manner of Lives we lead, *that we would no longer walk as the Gentiles walk, in the Vanity of their Mind, having their Underſtanding darken'd, but denying all ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, live godly, righteouſly and ſoberly in this preſent World*; *Eph.* 4. 17, 18. and order our Converſation ſo as becomes the Goſpel of Chriſt, leſt we be found in the Number of thoſe who deny God in Deed while they profeſs him in Word, and be reckon'd by him among the Worſt of Infidels while we place our ſelves in the Firſt Form of Chriſtians. Eſpecially Conſidering that the Atheiſtical part (which I fear is a great part) of the World being willing to have as much Company as they can (as all Men are that walk in the Dark) and Meaſuring us by our Actions more than by our Verbal Declarations, will be ready to Conclude that whatever we pretend, we are inwardly of the ſame Mind with them, becauſe our Lives and Manners are ſo much alike. And 'twill be in vain to tell them of

our Profeſſions, or to go to ſtop their Mouths with *Creeds* and *Articles*, they will ſtill inſiſt upon what we do, and appeal from our *Faith* to our *Works*, as that which moſt truly ſpeaks the Man, and reports the Temper and Complexion of his Mind. Let us declare and profeſs what we will, Men will judge of us after all by our *Works*, and ſo will God too, and ſo will he whom he has appointed to be the Judge of Quick and Dead, Chriſt Jeſus, who in the laſt Day will return this killing Anſwer to all Formal Hypocritical Profeſſors that ſhall then begin boldly to take Acquaintance with him upon the Account of ſome outward Priviledges, *Luke* 13. 27. *I tell you, I know you not whence ye are, depart from me all ye workers of Iniquity.*

Now to God the Father, &c.

A Diſ-

A Diſcourſe of Walking by Faith.

In Two Parts.

2 COR. v. 7.

We Walk by Faith, not by Sight.

THere are two ways of underſtanding theſe words. For either *Faith* and *Sight* here relate to different Objects, and then the Apoſtle does as good as ſay, We Live and Order our Converſation, not by what we ſee in this World, but by what we believe and expect in the next. Or they relate to one and the ſame Object, and then his Meaning is, that we live at preſent by a firm Belief and Expectation only of our *Future* State, and not by any preſent View, or clear Viſion of that State. Either of theſe Senſes will ſufficiently Comport with the Apoſtle's words, and equally ſerve his Purpoſe and Deſign, which is to Expreſs his Willingneſs to quit this State of Mortality upon Earth, upon the Confidence of Exchanging it for a better in Heaven. *Therefore*, ſays he in the Verſe before the Text, *we are always Confident, knowing that whileſt we are at home in the Body, we are abſent from the Lord*: And in the Verſe after, *We are Confident*

I ſay, willing rather to be abſent from the Body, and to be preſent with the Lord. Then comes in by way of Parentheſis between both, as the Ground of this his Willingneſs and Aſſurance, *For we walk by Faith, not by Sight.* As much as to ſay, we are not afraid of what the World ſo generally is, to depart out of this Life, but willing rather, becauſe we live by other Meaſures than the World generally does, not ordering our Lives by what we ſee here, but by what we believe and expect Hereafter: Or, becauſe we know that Death will tranſlate us to an open Viſion and real Fruition of that whereof we have here only the Faith and the Expectation, this being a ſtate of Faith only, not of Sight. 'Tis indifferent to the Occaſion which of theſe Senſes we take, ſince either of them will ſerve the turn, which is to ſhew the Reaſon why the Apoſtle was, and why all good Men ſhould be willing to depart this Life. But though they agree in the ſame uſe and Application, they being both a ſufficient Reaſon why a good Man ſhould be willing to leave this World, they are however very different in themſelves, and will lay us a Foundation for two diſtinct Subjects of Diſcourſe; the Firſt Senſe expreſſing the *Duty*, and the Second the *State* and *Condition* of Men in this preſent World.

Part I. I begin with that which Expreſſes the *Duty* of Man, which lays out to our Conſideration this Practical Propoſition,

That 'tis the Duty of every Chriſtian to Govern and Order his Life and Converſation, not by what he ſees in this World, but by what he Believes

lieves and Expects in the next. Which is the first Senſe of Walking by *Faith*, and not by *Sight.*

If we were to Collect the Duty of Men from their Practice, the direct Contrary of this would be their Meaſure. For nothing is more Certain than that the General way of the World is quite oppoſite to this Apoſtolical Maxim, indeed the very *Reverſe* of it. Inſtead of walking by Faith, not by Sight, their way is to walk by Sight, and not by Faith. Senſible Objects are with them the only Realities, and 'tis by the Impreſſions of theſe that they govern not only their Lives and Actions, but even their very *Opinions* and *Sentiments*, moſt of which are built upon the Fallacious Reports of Senſe, upon what they ſee, and upon what they feel, and are indeed no better than ſo many *Senſible Prejudices*, which they take up in their Infancy, and ſtick to all their Lives long. This draws after it a long Train of Miſchiefs both in regard to the Intellectual and Moral part of Man, moſt of our Errors in Speculation, as well as Vices in Practice deriving themſelves from this Fountain, and being as ſo many Grafts Shooting out from this Stock, only the Hurt that it does in Morality is ſo much the greater, as an Error in *Practice* is of worſe Conſequence than an Error in *Theory*. But be the Conſequence of it what it will, the World ſtill goes on in its old beaten Track, and obſtinately adheres to its Antient (and therefore with it the moſt Venerable) Meaſure, *Senſible Appearance*. And though ſome few Noble and Generous Spirits by the help of free Meditation, and recollected Reflection, have at length, with no ordinary difficulty reſcued their Underſtandings from this long-ſettled,

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and by Uſe almoſt warranted Uſurpation, no longer forming their Judgments of things upon the Confuſe Repreſentations of *Senſe*, but upon the clear and diſtinct Ideas of *Pure Reaſon*, yet where ſhall we find the Man that wholly renounces Senſe as the Meaſure of his *Life!* No, ſuch is the Infirmity of Human Nature, that all Men more or leſs *live* by Senſe, though ſome few *Think* and *Reaſon* above it. Not only Vulgar and Popular Souls that make up the Herd and Rabble of Mankind, but even thoſe of more refined Thought and Reflection are too much acted and govern'd by what their Senſe ſuggeſts to them: A thing which by the Corruption of our Nature is become ſuch an Appendage to it, that even thoſe very Men who have been ſo happy as utterly to diſcard this Meaſure in the Conduct of their *Studies*, do yet retain it in the Management of their *Lives*, and while the *Philoſopher* proceeds upon clear Intellectual Views, the *Chriſtian* is guided and determined by Senſible Repreſentations.

But this which is the Alloy and Mixture of *all* Spirits, makes up the whole Temper and Moral Conſtitution of ſome. There are Men (if I do not Miſ-call them by that Name) whoſe whole Meaſure, whoſe whole Conduct, whoſe whole Life and Converſation, whoſe whole Heart and Affection, I had almoſt ſaid whoſe whole Soul and Reaſon is nothing elſe but *Senſe*, and who walk as much by it as thoſe Creatures do which have no higher Principle. They will Believe nothing but what they are inform'd of by their Senſes, and for that reaſon they will not allow God, Angels or Spirits, or ſo much as their own *Souls* a place in their Creed, becauſe they *See* none of theſe things. And as they *Believe*

lieve Nothing but Senſible *Beings*, ſo they can neither *Love*, *Taſte*, or *Enjoy* any thing but Senſible *Good*. To tell them of the Pleaſures of Reaſon, ſuch as thoughtful Souls Enjoy in the Contemplation and Diſcovery of Truth, or Pious ones in the due Uſe and Management of their Moral Powers, the Delights of Meditation, or the Comforts of a good Conſcience, is to ſet Colours before a Blind Eye, they have neither Notion nor reliſh of the Matter. But ſhould you offer to go ſo high as to Diſcourſe to them of the Joys of Heaven and the Beatific Fruition of God, they can no longer hold up under the inſipid ſtupifying Lecture, but infallibly drop aſleep. They think of nothing but what is preſent and ſtands before them, and what by ſtriking ſome Senſe or other rouſes their Notice, and they value nothing but what is in hand, and what by its being there they can *Feel* to be *Subſtantial*. Futurities weigh but little with them, though within the Verge of this World, but to tell them of a Glorious Reverſion in *another* were inſtead of exciting their Faith, only to expoſe your own Credulity. They either cannot ſee to ſuch a diſtance, or the Object appears ſo little, ſo faint, and ſo obſcure, that they are no more mov'd at it than at one of the Feeble doubtful Lights of the Milky Way, when in the mean while every little trifling Pleaſure or Intereſt of this preſent World is to them like the Sun at Noon, that not only lights, but Warms them too, puts a new Motion into their Blood and Spirits, and quickens them with the Life of Spring. This Material, Viſible, Senſible, Palpable, and (to ſpeak all at once) this *Preſent* World is the World they are Fond of, and wholly Solicitous for, they love it with Dearneſs, ſpeak of it

it with Paſſion, enjoy it with Greedineſs, and leave it with Sorrow, and whatever glorious things are ſpoken of the City of God above, this is the place where they could be content for ever to take up their reſt, and ſpend their *Immortality*. One thing they deſire, *Pſal.* 27. 4. not that they may dwell in the Houſe of the Lord all the Days of their Life, to behold the fair Beauty of the Lord, and to viſit his Temple, but that they may have the Freehold of this Earth, enjoy the Perpetuity of it, and for ever (ſo poor and vile is their Ambition) Feaſt their Hungry Souls with the low Entertainments it affords. They (Poor Creatures) have no Reliſh, if Conception of any higher, being to the full as much Dead and *Crucify'd* to the other World, as the Mortified St. *Paul* was to this. But to this they are alive, and for this think it worth while to Live, and accordingly by this they Conduct their Lives, making this the End of all their Thoughts and Motions, and the Meaſure of all thoſe things which they call Good, Pleaſant, or Profitable, which they will allow no further to be ſo, than as they ſerve the Intereſt of this preſent and Worldly State and Life, thus *walking* altogether *by Sight*, and *not by Faith*.

Theſe are thoſe whom the Pſalmiſt calls *Men of the World, who have their Portion in this Life*, *Pſal.* 17. 14. all that they are ever *like*, and all that they ever *care*, to enjoy; and whom our Saviour ſets forth by the more ſignificant Title of *Children of this World*, *Luke* 16. 8. as if like the old Earth-born Race, they were Naturally bred and ingendred from it, begotten of the fruitful Slime, impregnated by the genial warmth of the Sun. And I fear theſe *Children* of the World make the great-

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eſt part of it, and ſome of them the greateſt Figure in it. For if we go to the Courts of Princes, what is there there but what Flatters and Entertains the Senſe, and what are the Lives of all great Perſons but continued Scenes of pompous Tumult, Noiſe and Shew, one great *Senſible Amuſement?* If from theſe we come down to thoſe of low Rank and Education, we ſhall find them yet deeper plunged (tho' not ſo *richly ſet*) in the Senſible Life, ſcarce minding any thing beſides their little Worldly Concernments. And, not to ſay any thing of the more Heatheniſh and Barbarous part of the World, we know a very Conſiderable Body of Men, who not Content to lead a Life of Senſe here, have found out a way to tranſlate it along with them into the other World, the Supreme Felicity of which they are taught to place in a *Senſual Paradiſe*, ſo living by Senſe, even while they live by Faith. But to what purpoſe ſhould I mention particulars, when *Mankind* is Sick of the ſame Diſeaſe, when the whole World runs upon the ſame Scent, and Chriſtians as greedily as any, who yet in one reſpect are more groſs than the *Mahumetans*, as expecting a Spiritual Heaven hereafter, after a Senſible Life led here. A Senſual Life is indeed a very proper Preparation for a Senſual Paradiſe, but what can be ſo Abſurd as to look for a Heaven of Refined and Spiritual Happineſs, and yet lead a Life of Senſe as an Introduction to it? And therefore though the *Mahumetan* be the greater *Epicure*, as carrying on his Senſuality through both Worlds, even beyond the *Grave*, where it naturally is Extinguiſh'd, and where the *Chriſtian* lets it fall, yet the *Chriſtian* is the greater *Sot*, who having ſo Spiritual and ſo Divine a Faith, will yet Chuſe to Live by Senſe. Which yet moſt of them wholly, and all of them too frequently do.

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But though this be too much the Practice, the quite Contrary is the true Rule and Duty of Chriſtians, to Walk by Faith, not by Sight; to govern their Lives, not by what they ſee in this World, but by what they Believe and Expect in the Next; and that for ſeveral Important Reaſons.

1. Becauſe, beſides the Sin and the Miſery, the Weakneſs and the Folly, and the Many ill Examples and corrupt Principles which every where abound, they can ſee nothing in this World but what is *vain* and *unſatisfying*. The World indeed promiſes great things to its Lovers and Votaries, and truly to ſee Men ſo eager and warm in the purſuit of its Intereſts and Enjoyments, Pitying thoſe that want them, and Envying thoſe who have them, one would be tempted to think there were really ſomething in them. But the wiſeſt and the greateſt Enquirer found juſt nothing, and both thoſe who were before him, and thoſe who come after him have ſped no better. And ſince Men have been hitherto diſappointed in the Search of Happineſs (though never any thing, no not *Truth* it ſelf, was ſo narrowly look'd after) there is no reaſon why any Man ſhould hope to find that *Now*, which the whole World have been *till now* ſeeking in Vain. But were there no Experience in the Caſe, Reaſon alone would ſatisfy as many as would Conſult her, of the utter Vanity of all Senſible and Worldly Objects. For how is it poſſible that a Soul made Capable of Enjoying an Infinite Good ſhould find Happineſs or Satisfaction in any Creature? What Proportion is there between ſuch an Object and ſuch a Capacity! And how then can One fill the Other? But Now if all the things that the World can preſent to our Senſes be but ſo many gilded Vanities,

Vanities, (as even Senſe it ſelf can witneſs that they are) then 'tis plain that they cannot be our *End*, and if they cannot be our *End*, then 'tis as plain that they ought not to be our *Meaſure*. We ought not therefore to govern our Lives by what we ſee here, nor reckon that Good or Evil, Profitable or Prejudicial to us, which is ſo at Preſent and in a Worldly reſpect, ſince being not themſelves the greateſt Goods or Evils, they may come in Competition with *Greater*, and ſo loſe and tranſpoſe their Natures, but we ought to have our Eye upon the other World, and reckon that only Good which ſerves to make us Happy there, and that only Evil which ſerves to make us Miſerable there, where the Happineſs and the Miſery are both at the Height.

2. Becauſe the things that we ſee here are not only Internally Vain and Deficient in their Natures, but alſo *Tranſient and Momentary in their Duration*, which may alſo be Conſider'd as one great part and inſtance of their Vanity. This is the Character of all Senſible Objects, nay, even of our Senſes themſelves, that they are but for a Time, and that *Time* the Apoſtle tells us too is *Short*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. Our Bodies are built but for a little while, and our Senſes oftentimes do not laſt ſo long, as if unwilling to ſtay to be Witneſſes to the Ruins of their falling Tenements. But which ſoever gets to the Goal firſt, 'tis certain that they both haſten to Ruin as faſt as they can, always waſting and Mouldring away from us, and the World without us will not be long behind us, ſince the *Faſhion* of it is continually paſſing away, always Changing and Shifting its Scenes, and rolling on as faſt as the

Wheels of the Sun, or the Wings of Time can carry it to its great Doom and final Diſſolution. The ſhort is, all things here have an End, and are drawing apace to it, we are haſtning from the World, and the World from us, every thing turns upon the ſame Axis of Time, only ſome deſcribe a larger *Circumference* than others, and ſo are the longer in finiſhing their *Circle*, but finiſh it they will all, and even Time it ſelf ſhall be no more; and therefore we ought not to take our Meaſure from ſuch paſſing and unſtable things as theſe, which are here to Day and gone to Morrow, nor Conduct our Lives and Converſations by them, but rather Steer our Courſe by the Fixt and Immovable *Points* of the other World, by thoſe Goods and by thoſe Evils which remain for ever, which Senſe cannot reach, which Faith only can ſee, and which Eternity only can Meaſure. All which is but a larger Deſcant upon the Apoſtle's Ground, when he reaſons thus, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. *We look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen. For the things which are ſeen are Temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are Eternal.*

3. Another Reaſon why we ſhould not govern our ſelves by what we ſee in this World, but by what we Believe and expect in the Next, is, *Becauſe there is no univerſal Juſtice done to Men in this preſent World, according to the different Conduct of their Lives*; the Complete and Final Adminiſtration of that being (for ſeveral Wiſe and Momentous Reaſons) Suſpended and Adjourn'd to another State. That this is ſo, need not be ſhewn, it being the great Objection of all bad Men, and the Complaint of many good ones, that Happineſs and Miſery are ſo promiſ-

promiſcuouſly and indifferently diſpens'd, that Men are not dealt with according to their doings, but that Vice uſurps the Happineſs which belongs to Vertue, and Vertue groans under the Calamity which is due to Vice. All Men See and Experience this, though all perhaps do not *Complain* of it, being Senſible that Sufficient Reaſons may be aſſigned from the preſent State of things to Juſtify the inequality of this Diſpenſation. But I am not to give an Account here of the Reaſon of the thing, my Concern at preſent is only to argue from the thing it ſelf, that therefore *Faith* and not *Sight* is to be our Meaſure, the Meaſure both of our Judgments concerning others, and of our own Behaviour. That we are to paſs Judgment upon the Conditions of Good and Bad Men, not by what we ſee befal them at preſent (this being neither the Seaſon nor the Place of Diſtinction and Recompence) but by the Rewards and Puniſhments which attend them in the other World. And that we are to order our own Behaviour either well or ill, not as we ſee Vertue depreſs'd or Vice flouriſh in this Life, (where, as the Wiſe Man obſerves, *Eccl.* 9. Time and Chance happens to all, and where a Man knows neither Love nor Hatred by all that is before him) but by the reſpective Portions that ſhall be allotted to them in the next, when Perſons, Things and Actions ſhall be weigh'd in a true Ballance, when every Man ſhall be rewarded according to his Works, and inherit either a Happy or a Miſerable Eternity according to the good or ill Uſe he has made of Time. The Sum is, here Juſtice and Judgment Slumber and Sleep, like things happen to all, or if there be any difference made, 'tis on the ſide of Wicked Men, who commonly

ſpeed beſt. But hereafter the Divine *Nemeſis* will awake, and that thoroughly, take to her her Sword and her Ballance, redreſs all the inequalities that have happen'd during the time of her Slumber, and diſtribute to every one his own. Then Vertue ſhall recover her Right out of the Hands of Vice, and Vice ſhall be as Miſerable as it deſerves. And therefore ſince we profeſs to believe this, we ſhould live and govern our ſelves by this Faith, and proceed in our Choice of a good or bad Life by this Meaſure, and not by thoſe viſible Events which appear to our View in this Life, which is a ſtate of *Tryal*, not of *Reward*.

4. There is yet another very Conſiderable Reaſon why it concerns all Chriſtians thus to Walk by Faith and not by Sight, and that is, *That the Privation of Senſible Good may not be a Puniſhment to them in the other World*. That there will be ſuch a Privation is here ſuppoſed, and in it ſelf moſt Certain. Within a little while we muſt part with all Senſible Objects, and utterly loſe the Enjoyment of them. Let us adhere to the Creatures never ſo cloſely, and Hug and Imbrace them never ſo dearly, we muſt let go our hold; and let us tie our ſelves to them by never ſo many Knots Death will diſſolve them all, and make a final and thorough Divorce between us. For 'tis by our Union with our own Bodies that we are United to thoſe other Bodies which Surround us, and 'tis by the Mediation of our Senſes that we have any intercourſe with this Material and Senſible World, the Goods and Enjoyments of which, as great and as numerous as they are, hang all upon one ſingle Thread, that of *Life*. When therefore that ſhall come to be Cut,

all

all will fall with it, the Enjoyments of Senſe will all be at an End, and the whole Creation will at one blow be ſeparated from us, and drop away under us. Now though this *Privation* of it ſelf be no Puniſhment, it being no pain to be without a thing, unleſs a Man at the ſame time deſires it, ſince not the bare Abſence but the Want of a thing is that which makes us uneaſy, yet it will be extremely Painful and Afflictive wherever it meets with contrary Deſires, and then indeed it is that it properly begins to be a *Privation*, which will be the Caſe, the ſad Caſe of all thoſe Spirits which depart hence in the love of Senſible Objects. For as the Soul is diſpoſed at the Moment of Death, ſo will She be after Death, carrying the ſame Affections and Reliſhes with her out of the Body, which She once had in it, and which She will now retain for ever. In this Life the Will is in ſome Meaſure Mutable and Flexible even in the worſt of Men, but the other Life being uncapable of Change, it then becomes Stiff and Inflexible as the Decrees of Fate. What they then Love they Love always, and what they do then not Love they never will. The laſt Caſt is then thrown, and as the Die falls it ſhall for ever lie. The Will ſhall then ſtand like the *Axis* of the Earth, fixt and ſtable to *immoveable Points*, without any Variation or Declination. Which ſettled and ſteddy Poſture ſome Conceive (and not improbably) to be expreſs'd by that Order of the King in the Parable concerning the Gueſt that came to the Marriage without a Wedding-Garment, *Mat.* 22. 13. *Bind him Hand and Foot, and take him away, and caſt him into outer Darkneſs*; by Hand and Foot, meaning the Paſſions and Affections of the Soul, which ſhall then (how Free ſo ever now)

be bound and tied up, and made uncapable of altering their Poſture. The Soul therefore whoſe unhappineſs it is to depart hence hot and warm from the Imbraces of Senſible Object, whoſe Affections are cleaving to them and Ingaged upon them, who leaves the World in Perſon before She has left it in Heart, will always retain the ſame Love and Paſſion for theſe things, and yet be uncapable of Enjoying them, and conſequently always Miſerable in the want of them. And none but thoſe unhappy Spirits who feel this Univerſal Privation are able to tell how great the Deſolation of it is, and to what Extremity of Poverty they then are reduced. Such to be ſure as can never be felt in this Life, and of which all that we here call *Poverty* is but a faint Type or Shadow. If therefore we would have this total Privation of all Senſible Objects, in which we ſhall unavoidably be all placed by Death, not to be painful and tormenting to us, we muſt now *Detache* and Diſingage our Hearts from the Creatures, wean our ſelves betimes from the Love of Senſible Objects; (which by the way gives a good Account of the Reaſonableneſs of true *Chriſtian Mortification* and Self-denial) accuſtom our ſelves to deſpiſe what our Senſes recommend to us as pleaſant, learn to be without what is grateful to them, deny our Senſual Appetites ſo long till they ceaſe to crave, practice the way of Separate Spirits before-hand, be as Intellectual as we can, die to the World while we live in it, and, in one word, learn to *Walk by Faith and not by Sight*.

And how *Happy* is the Man that can do ſo! that can Conduct and Govern his Steps by the bright Views of the other World, and not by the dim Appearances of this. That can Walk ſo direct and upright,

upright, with his Eyes ſo fixt upon the things above, as wholly to overlook the Things, or rather the *Nothings* that are below. That can keep his Sight ſo intent upon Heaven and the Glory that ſhall there be revealed, as not to regard either the Enjoyments or the Sufferings of this preſent time, ſo fix'd upon *Eternity* as not to be moved by the Pleaſures or by the Profits of Sin, which are but for a *Seaſon*. That by the aid of an active and well-grounded Faith can look beyond all thoſe painted Scenes of Vanity, which either the Devil, the World, or his own Fleſh ſets before him, and carry his Proſpect into thoſe remote Regions where Senſe, though arm'd with a *Teleſcope* cannot reach ſo far into the other World as to enter within the Veil, and with *Moſes*, even *to ſee him that is inviſible. Heb.* 11. 27. That can (in fine) with the Apoſtle Habituate himſelf to look at the things that are not ſeen, and that are Eternal, the Bright, Inviſible Objects of the other World, and that ſo long till his dazzled Eye can ſee no more of this, and his elevated Mind is wrought up not only to a Contempt, but even to a Forgetfulneſs of the little Earth upon which he dwells. O happy Oblivion of Earthly things which puts Heaven and Eternity in our View! Nothing which this viſible World can ſet before us is worthy our regard, eſpecially when at the End of the Landskip the Inviſible Glories of Heaven Solicit and Court our Love. Nothing which our Carnal Eyes can preſent to us is fit to ſtay or ingage a Soul that is Capable of Enjoying God, none of theſe Fading periſhing Objects deſerve a Room in that Heart, whoſe Capacity is Infinite, and which was made for Eternity. Let us then ſhut our Eyes to this Tranſient Scene, this

Vain Shew of the World, and open them only to that which is truly worthy of our View, the Solid and Laſting Glories that attend the Faithful Walkers with God above, the Felicities of Heaven. Let theſe be always in our View, and by theſe *fixt Stars* let us Steer our Courſe in this our Paſſage through the troubleſome Waves of this World, and not by thoſe *Wandring Meteors* which riſe from the *Earth*. Theſe are Falſe Lights, and ſuch as will end in Darkneſs. Let us not therefore Sail by them, but take the *Stars* of *Heaven* for our Guides, thoſe ſafe and tried Directors, that will not fail to Conduct us to our Haven, thus walking by Faith and not by Sight, taking our Meaſures from the other World, and not from this, till we come to Enjoy what we now Believe, and our *Faith* be turn'd into *Viſion*.

The great Advantage of thus walking by Faith is, that it will help us to *Overcome* the *World*, that is, to Subdue the Impreſſions that are made upon us by the Creatures, and by the Devil that employs them to draw off our Minds from the Love of God, and from a Life of Devotion and Obedience to him. To Suppreſs all Worldly Paſſions and Inclinations, thoſe eſpecially which Tempt us to place our Good and our Happineſs in the things of the World, and forſaking the true Fountain of Living Water to apply our Thirſty Mouths to theſe *Broken Ciſterns* that can hold none. To be Crucify'd to the World, and to have the World Crucify'd to us, to be dead to its Pleaſures, and inſenſible of its Charms, to turn the deaf Ear, and the blind Eye to all thoſe Pomps and Vanities of the World which we renounc'd at our Baptiſm, and to have it no longer in our *Hearts*, but under our *Feet*. To overcome thoſe three triumphant Conquerors that are in the World,

World, and whereof St. *John* makes the Sum Total of it to Conſiſt, *the Luſt of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eye, and the Pride of Life*, to be no longer Slaves to our Senſuality, our Covetouſneſs, nor our Pride, or Ambition, or any of thoſe falſe Reliſhes and depraved Taſtes of the Soul which diſpoſe it to Mind and Savour the Earth, and Earthly things. Not to ſuffer our ſelves to be carried away with the Torrent of a Vicious Age, or to have ſo much regard for the Manners, Cuſtoms or Authorities of a wicked World as to be Conform'd to them, or follow a Multitude to do Evil, not to be over-aw'd by great Examples, nor Corrupted by Bad ones. To be above the *Opinion* of the World, and not to hang upon the Cenſures or Applauſes of Men, or upon their Kindneſs or Diſaffection towards us; nor to be Tranſported into undue Paſſions by any of the Injuſtices, Unkindneſſes, Affronts, Abuſes, or Diſappointments that we meet with in the World. To overcome the Evil as well as the Good of it, to bear its Frowns as well as not to be inchanted with its Smiles, and no more to be diſturb'd at the Experiment and Diſcovery of its *Vanity*, than to be over Charm'd with its deluſive *Shew* of *Happineſs*, as well Knowing that there is a Good proportion'd to the importunity of our Appetites, and that the other World has Enjoyments that will fill that Emptineſs of our Natures which this only deludes and ſtretches wider, and that will quench that Thirſt which this only Inflames. To be equal Proof againſt Proſperity and Adverſity, ſo as not to be diſpirited by the one, nor intoxicated by the other, but to carry an even and well-pois'd Mind in all the turns and varieties of a reeling and tottering World,

World, and in whatever State we are, therewith to be Content. To diſcover the great *Deceitfulneſs of Sin*, the Depths of Satan, the Myſtery of Iniquity, thoſe Cheats, I mean, and Fallacies whereby Evil preſents it ſelf to us, and too frequently impoſes upon us, under the Appearance and Semblance of Good, and at the ſame time to be ſo fix'd and ſteddy in what we know to be *really* that which the other *ſeems*, that neither the Pleaſures nor the Terrours of the World ſhall either intice or deter us from it. In fine, not to have our Vertue or our Goodneſs depend upon any Worldly Intereſts, Accidents, or Circumſtances, nor upon any Juncture, Revolution, or Turn of the Times, but at all times to keep exactly to what is Right and Fit, whether it pleaſes or not, whether we get or loſe Friends or Preferment by it, and to reſolve at any rate to pleaſe God, and ſatisfy our Conſciences, however the World goes, and whatever the World ſays or thinks. This is to *overcome the World*, and a great Victory indeed it is, beyond thoſe of the greateſt Worldly Heroes and Conquerours. And 'tis a Life of Faith that will inable us to obtain this great Victory, according to that of the Apoſtle St. *John*, *This is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith*, that is, a firm, hearty, and well-grounded Belief of the Truths of the Chriſtian Religion, and an actual Conſideration of thoſe Truths, which will furniſh us with unanſwerable Anſwers to all thoſe Temptations that the World can lay before us. For there are but Two Paſſions whereby Man may be wrought upon, *Hope* and *Fear*; and there are but Two Motives to work upon thoſe Two Paſſions, that is, *Good* and *Evil*. But now Faith with one Hand points

points out to us infinitely greater Goods, and with the other infinitely greater Evils than any the World has to propoſe to us. It opens one Scene to us and ſhews us Heaven, it opens another and ſhews us Hell. And after Two ſuch Proſpects as theſe, what, what can the World preſent to our View that ſhall be worthy of its regard? And how poor an Impreſſion will be made upon our Hearts, by *All this will I give thee*, when this preſent World is ſo much out-bid by the Faith of the Next! But then it muſt not be *any* Faith that can do all this, not a few Slight, Superficial, Tranſient Acts of it, but a Firm, Hearty and thorough Belief, ſuch as abides upon our Minds, and goes into the Ordinary Habit of our Thoughts, which we daily Carry about with us, and conſtantly Converſe with, it muſt be a *Walking* by *Faith*. For the Temptations of the World Conſiſt of Preſent Goods and Preſent Evils, and this is the great Advantage that the Devil has above Chriſt, that he Courts our Affections, Bribes our Paſſions, and Cheapens our Souls with *ready Money in his Hand*. And therefore unleſs we can ſet one Certainty againſt another, oppoſe Evidence to Evidence, the Evidence of Reaſon and Faith to the Evidence of Senſe, the Scale that holds the World (as light as it is) will weigh down the other, and our Prejudic'd Hearts will give Sentence for Earth againſt Heaven. For what though there be no Compariſon between the good things of the other World, and the good things of this, or between the Evils of the other World and the Evils of this, abſolutely Conſider'd, yet will not the Advantage of *Preſentneſs* and *Certainty* make the latter more prevalent with us, and what likelihood is there that the things of the other

World

World (as great as they are) faintly and imperfectly believ'd ſhould have that force and influence upon our Hearts, as the things of this which we ſee with our Eyes, and feel with our Hands? But when once our *Faith* of the Other World comes to be like the *Senſe* of this, and we are as well aſſured of Heaven and Hell, as of any of thoſe Senſible Objects which touch us with their Impreſſions, what Temptation then would find Audience, or ſo much as Admittance with us, and what would all the World be to a Man that firmly and heartily believes theſe great things, and *Walks* by the Faith and ſerious Conſideration of them.

But oh how Difficult a thing is it to lead this Life of Faith while we carry theſe Bodies of Fleſh and Blood about us, and Converſe with a Senſible World, and which is worſe with *Senſual Men*! The Soul being plunged in Senſe, is hardly touch'd but with Senſible things, which being ſo near her, and (by the Bodies ſide) ſo near a *Kin* to her, have a Strange Influence upon her, and affect her with moſt vigorous and lively Paſſions, not by reaſon of the greatneſs of the Objects (for alas they are not Conſiderable) but by the Force and Manner of the Impreſſion. For this reaſon it is that there are ſo Few that walk by Faith, and that can turn their Eyes from Temporal things, and hold them fixt upon thoſe that are Eternal. The Generality of Mankind (as I obſerv'd in the beginning) are wholly taken up with Senſible Objects, and have no Taſte, hardly ſo much as *Faith* for any thing beyond them. And as for thoſe Few that are otherwiſe ingaged, and that live by other Meaſures (eſpecially if they venture to talk now and then of the other World, or to ſay any thing of

Spirits

Spirits and *Apparitions*) they are look'd upon as a ſort of whimſical Brainſick Men, mere *Viſionaries*, that indulge their Melancholy, and fright themſelves with Spectres of their own raiſing. If then we will be of the number of thoſe Few that abandoning the Meaſures of Senſe, dare betake themſelves to a Life of Faith, we muſt be Content to undergo a great deal of Pain and Travail within, and a great deal of Scorn and Deriſion without, we muſt walk Circumſpectly, not as Fools, but as Wiſe, and yet be counted Fools, and that by thoſe whom the World eſteems Wiſe, and who have the Creditable Name of *Wits*. And if we cannot bear this we muſt go out of the World. And ſo it would be beſt to do however, I mean to retire from the Noiſe and Hurry of it as much and as far as we can, to rid our ſelves of all its Weights and Incumbrances, to be as looſe from it, and have as little to do in it, and as few Concerns with it as poſſibly we may, that ſo Diſtance and Abſence (that which ſo cools our Affections to the other World) may make us indifferent to this, prevent our taking new Impreſſions, and wear out thoſe we have already receiv'd. But we muſt retire into our Selves as well as from the World, be much in Contemplation of its Vanity (the only ſide of the World that deſerves our Conſideration) think Continually upon Eternity, and after all Pray earneſtly with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 119. that God would *turn away our Eyes, leſt they behold Vanity, and quicken us in his way*, That narrow unfrequented way of *Faith*, which only leads to Life and Glory.

And

Part II. And ſo much concerning the Firſt Senſe of the Words, that which expreſſes the *Duty*, I now go on to Conſider the Second Senſe, that which expreſſes the *State* and *Condition* of Man in this World, which the Apoſtle here repreſents to be a State of Faith, not of Viſion, if we ſuppoſe him (as we now do) to refer Faith and Viſion to one and the ſame Object, and that Object to be a Future Life. In reference to which our preſent Condition (as he tells us) is to *VValk by Faith and not by Sight.*

Before I go any further, I cannot but obſerve the difference that already appears between the *State* and the *Practice* of Men. The Practice of Men generally is to Walk by Sight, not by Faith, but the State of Men on the Contrary is to Walk by Faith, not by Sight. Concerning which laſt, that our following Account may be the more Clear and Orderly, it ſhall be diſpoſed into this Form.

Firſt, I ſhall ſtate the Notions of theſe Two Fundamental Terms here, upon which all reſts, *Faith* and *Sight.*

Secondly, I ſhall ſhew, *That the Preſent State of Man, in reference to the other VVorld, is not a State of Sight, but of Faith.*

Thirdly, I ſhall endeavour to offer ſuch Conſiderations as ſhall juſtify the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God in allotting this latter State to Man while he is in this World.

To begin with an Account of the Firſt of theſe, by Faith I ſuppoſe every Body would be underſtood to Mean an Aſſent or Perſwaſion of the Mind founded upon Teſtimony or Authority. And if the Teſtimo-

Teſtimony be of God then we call it Divine Faith, if of Man then we call it Human Faith. The General Nature of Faith is the ſame in each, ſince they both rely upon Teſtimony, only as the Teſtimony differs the Faith alſo varies, and Human Teſtimony differing from Divine as much as Fallible differs from Infallible, the ſame in Proportion will alſo be the difference between Human and Divine Faith. Which yet ſeems rather a Gradual than a Specific Difference, the only Effect which the different Quality of the Teſtimony has upon the Aſſent being to give it a higher Degree of Certainty and Aſſurance. And thus is Faith diſtinguiſh'd into Human and Divine; though when we ſpeak of Faith Abſolutely and Simply, we are preſumed to intend *Divine* Faith, which alſo I ſuppoſe to be that which is intended in this place.

By Sight here, as oppoſed to Faith, we may underſtand either the Viſion of a thing, or the clear Perception of Truth. For Sight is Twofold as well as Faith, that of the Senſe which perceives ſuch Objects as are proportion'd to it, and that of the Mind which diſcerns things of a proportionate Nature by their prope Light. The former I would call Senſible, the latter Intellectual Sight. This Intellectual Sight is the ſame with *Knowledge*, and admits again of a double Order being either *Intuitive*, or *Demonſtrative*. *Intuitive* when we perceive the Agreement or Diſagreement of one Idea with another immediately and by themſelves, without the Mediation of any other Idea. *Demonſtrative*, when this Agreement or Diſagreement is perceiv'd, not immediately by Comparing the Ideas with themſelves, but mediately by Comparing them with a Third, that is, when we perceive that they

they agree or diſagree with themſelves, as we find them to agree or diſagree with ſome Third Idea, which we are often forc'd to make uſe of as a Common Meaſure, becauſe we cannot always ſo Collate and Confront our other Ideas together as to ſee whether they agree or no by their mere Compariſon. This Third intervening Idea is what we uſually call a Medium or *Proof*, the Proceſs of the Mind by it from one thing to another is *Reaſoning*, and the Diſcovery that reſults from it is what we properly call *Science*, which in ſhort is neither more nor leſs than a clear Perception of a Concluſion by clear and certain Principles or Premiſes. I ſay *Clear*, for this is the great difference that diſtinguiſhes it from Faith. For Faith may be *Firm*, becauſe he that believes in God does not heſitate or doubt of the truth of what he reveals. And it may alſo be certain, becauſe it may rely upon the moſt certain Foundation, the Teſtimony of God, who is Infallible in himſelf, and cannot deceive. And thus far it ſtands upon a level with Science. But herein it comes ſhort of it in that it is not Clear or Evident. For he that Believes does not give his Aſſent, becauſe either by Senſe or Reaſon he perceives the thing to be thus or thus, but merely becauſe he has the Word of God for it. Which though it be enough to found a Firm and Certain, is not however enough to beget a Clear and Evident Aſſent.

From this Account of Faith and Sight it appears that the great and diſtinguiſhing Character of Sight is Light and Evidence, and that of Faith Inevidence and Obſcurity. Not that this Obſcurity is to be applied to the Formal Reaſon of Faith (which may be clear enough, and ſometimes as clear as any Natural

tural Light) but to the Matter or Object of it. For we are Carefully to diſtinguiſh between the thing believ'd, and the Reaſon or Motive that induces us to believe it. There may be a clear Reaſon why a Man ſhould believe an Obſcure thing. But then as the Reaſon is never the leſs Clear becauſe the Matter is Obſcure, ſo neither is the Matter ever the leſs Obſcure becauſe the Reaſon is Clear. Not that this again is ſo to be underſtood, neither as if the Matter of Faith were abſolutely and in it ſelf inevident, and ſuch as could not be known. For (notwithſtanding the deciſion of ſome Eminent Schoolmen to the contrary in this Point) I can well Conceive that the ſame Propoſition may be at once the Object of both Faith and Science. And ſhould God reveal to me any Mathematical Truth, as ſuppoſe that two Triangles having the ſame Baſe, and being within the ſame Parallels, are Equal; and ſhould I who at firſt receiv'd it upon his Authority, come afterwards to be able to Demonſtrate it my ſelf upon the Known Principles of Art; who, that well Conſiders the Natures of theſe things, would ſay that my Science evacuated my Faith, and that I ceaſed to be a Believer, as ſoon as I became a Philoſopher? And who I wonder would refuſe a Demonſtrative Account (if it might be had) of a Revealed Truth, ſuppoſe, of the Creation of the World, merely for fear of injuring his Faith, which yet he were bound in Conſcience to do if Inevidence and Obſcurity were ſo abſolutely of the Eſſence of Faith as ſome pretend: For then it would be unlawful to inform ones ſelf by Study of the Natural Account of any reveal'd Truth, becauſe 'tis unlawful to deſtroy ones Faith, which I think is a Scruple that can hardly Enter, to be ſure never

ſtay long in any conſidering Head. When therefore the Object of Faith is Charged with Obſcurity, and Faith is ſaid (as it Commonly is) to be of Inevident things, the Meaning is not of an *Abſolute*, but of a *Relative* inevidence. Not that what is Believ'd is ſo all over dark and obſcure that it cannot (while believ'd) abſolutely be known, but only that it cannot under that Formality, and ſo far as it is *Believ'd*, being always in that reſpect inevident, how bright and clear ſo ever it may be in other reſpects. The ſhort is, let the Object be never ſo evident and demonſtrable in it ſelf, and upon other Accounts, yet as *Believ'd* it is always Obſcure, Faith having no regard to the proper Light and Evidence of the Thing, but only to the Teſtimony of the Revealer, whoſe bare Authority is the only Ground ſhe builds her Aſſent upon, though the Truth of the thing it ſelf, abſolutely Conſider'd, may alſo ſtand upon other Foundations, and be rationally proved by Arguments from within, and ſo be ſeen by its own Light. But let the Light ſhine never ſo bright upon the Object from other Sides, Faith lets in none, nor has any regard to that which ſhe finds there, but walks with her Eyes Shut, contenting her ſelf with the certainty of Revelation, and leaving to Science the Evidence of the thing; So that the Object is always dark to her, how clear and lightſome ſoever it may be in it ſelf. Wherein it falls very ſhort of the Perfection of Science, though in reſpect to Firmneſs and Certainty it may be equal to it. All which is briefly Couch'd in that Excellent Account of Faith given by the Author to the *Hebrews*, when he ſays, *Heb.* 11. 1. that 'tis the *Subſtance of things hoped for, and the Argument of things not ſeen.* Where by Subſtance and Argument he equals it with Science in regard of the Firm-

Firmneſs and Certainty of the Aſſent, but by ſaying that 'tis of things *not ſeen*, he makes it Vail and Stoop to it in point of Evidence, in which reſpect indeed Faith is as much inferiour to Sight, as Darkneſs is to Light.

I have dwelt the longer upon this Matter, and Diſcours'd it the more nicely, partly that the Limits between Faith and Sight being duely ſet, and their Differences well adjuſted, it may appear that there is not that Repugnancy between Faith and Reaſon that is pretended by ſome, who decry Philoſophy as inconſiſtent with Faith, and therefore not fit for a Chriſtian (ſince, as has been ſhewn, they are not ſuch Enemies but that they can both dwell under the ſame Roof) and partly, that it may appear how imperfect and defective a State of Faith is in compariſon of Sight, as having nothing of that Light and Brightneſs wherewith the other ſo clearly Shines, that ſo we may be touch'd with the more lively Sentiment of Humility and Self-dejection, when we ſhall come to underſtand that this dark Obſcure State is that which is allotted to us while we are in this World. Which leads me to ſhew,

Secondly, *That the preſent State of Man in reference to the other World is not a State of Sight, but of Faith.* Some will tell you, and with great ſhew of Reaſon too, that this is the State of Man in Reference even to *this* World, of whoſe Exiſtence we can be convinc'd only by Faith, there being no ſtrict Demonſtration (though many Senſible Preſumptions) for it, as indeed there is not, according to them, for any thing but God and our own Souls, which are the only Objects to the belief of whoſe Exiſtence they will allow us to be determin'd by any certain and inſuperable Argument. I ſhall not in-

dulge Curioſity ſo far as to enter into a diſcuſſion of this Matter. Only I here remarque that whatever Aſſurance, beſides the Word of God for it, we may have of the *Exiſtence* of a Material World, the *Nature* of things however is ſo dark and overſhadow'd, ſo retired and withdrawn from our View, that though I cannot well ſay that we walk here by *Faith*, ſince God has not thought it worth while to make us any Revelation about theſe Matters, yet I think I may ſay that we Walk by any thing rather than by *Sight*. For alas what is it that we *See*? Nothing but the Shell and Surface of things, and there too only the groſſer and ruder Strokes of Nature's Pencil. Our Natural Senſes are too dull, and ſo are our Artificial ones too, to hold any Proportion with the Works of God, who even in *theſe* his ways is unſearchable and paſt finding out. Glaſſes diſcover to us many things, but leave us ignorant of a great deal more; and the greateſt thing which they help us to ſee is the defect of our own Sight. Beſides our Senſes are ſo *Fallacious* too as well as *dull*, that inſtead of Building upon their Reports, one of the greateſt *Atchievments* of our Underſtandings is to Correct their Errours, which take ſuch early Poſſeſſion of our Souls, and grow up ſo familiarly with us from our Infancy, that they ſettle into ſo many inveterate Prejudices, which we are afterwards apt to Confound with the dictates of the pureſt Reaſon, and 'tis late, if ever, that we diſcover our ſo confirm'd and ſo *Naturalized* Miſtake. But Suppoſe we do, and that never ſo early too, yet how Contracted will be the Sphere of our Science, and how little is it we are ever like to know of the things about us, when even our Reaſon (the Great Inſtrument of our Knowledge and our ſo much valued and boaſted Perfection) is founded

ded upon the Narrowneſs of our Minds, which not being able to Judge of the Truth or Falſhood of a Propoſition by the mere Compariſon of the two Ideas which Compoſe it, are fain to have recourſe to a Third, and ſo from ſomething more Known to proceed in the Search of what is Unknown. If then the Light which is in us be Darkneſs, how great is that Darkneſs, as our Saviour ſaid in another Caſe. The truth is, the Eyes of our Underſtanding are ſo dark, and our Intellectual Views ſo ſhort, that after all our Study, we know little more of the World we live in (beſides the *Geography* of it, and a few of its greater *Motions*) than of the remoteſt Regions in the Planetary Orbs. The whole Earth is to us as one great *America*, and though Men will dig as deep in it for *Knowledge* as they do for *Gold*, yet we are not only utter Strangers to its inner Regions, but to its Surface too, every thing we meet with there wears its Mask and Veil, and paſſes by us *incognito*, we converſe with Riddles and Wonders, the leaſt things puzzle and amuſe us as well as the Greateſt, and *Nature*, the Conſtant Subject of our Philoſophy, has its *Myſteries* as well as *Faith*. So that we can hardly be ſaid even with reſpect to this World to *Walk by Sight*.

Much leſs then in reſpect of the other, which is parted and skreen'd from us by an impenetrable Veil; and like the Top of Mount *Sinai* when God was there, all wrapt up in Clouds and thick Darkneſs. *Between us and you*, ſaid *Abraham* to the rich Man, *there is a great Gulph fix'd: So that they which would paſs from hence to you cannot, neither can they paſs to us, that would come from thence*, Luk. 16. 26. And the like may be ſaid here, there being as truly a Gulph fix'd (though not altogether ſo impaſſable a One) between the other World and this, as be-

tween Heaven and Hell. Χάσμα μέγα ἐστηγμένον, a Great Eſtabliſh'd Gulph, a ſettled interval, a *Fatal* Diſtance. Not only a Gulph too wide to be paſs'd over, but a Partition Wall too thick to be look'd through, divides the Intellectual from the Material World, ſo that allowing only for extraordinary Caſes, there is no Commerce or Communication to be had between them. Nor are they acquainted with each others State and Condition, but are mere *Night* and *Myſtery* to one another. Or whatever they of the other World may know of ours (as having been once here) we at leaſt know nothing of theirs, and a great many of us I'm afraid care not whether they ever do or No. But the moſt Curious and Inquiſitive muſt here be Content to be as ignorant as the moſt Careleſs and Regardleſs, and what *Solomon* obſerves of *untimely* Births is as true in another Senſe of the moſt *Mature* ones, nay of the moſt Aged Livers, that *they come in with Vanity, and depart in Darkneſs*, *Eccl.* 6. 4. know nothing of the Place and State whither they are going, the dark inviſible *Hades*; but are notwithſtanding all their Wiſdom and Experience in other things full as ignorant of the other World, as unborn Infants are of this, as having neither *Senſe* nor *Notion* of it. So that there is no Walking here by Sight (unleſs we could ſee in the Dark, without a Beam of Light to direct us) we may perhaps Feel out our Way by the Clue of Faith, and that's as much as the Wiſeſt of us all can hope to do.

For Firſt, As to the *Exiſtence* of another World or State after this, we believe indeed that there is and will be ſuch a thing, and have (no doubt) good Foundation for this our Belief, but we have no *Knowledge* of it, ſtrictly ſpeaking, ſuch I mean as is founded upon Rational Evidence. Our Reaſon

indeed

indeed (if not Bribed and Corrupted by our Paſſions) will repreſent it as a very probable and reaſonable Suppoſition, but all the poſitive and deciſive Certainty we have of it is from the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt, who is therefore ſaid to have brought Life and Immortality to Light through the Goſpel, 2 *Tim.* 1. 10. Which he may be ſaid to have done, not only becauſe it was never Clearly and Fully reveal'd before (this being one of thoſe Myſteries which St. *Paul* ſays, *Rom.* 16. 25. were kept Secret from the Beginning of the World) but becauſe it was *Knowable* only by Revelation, the Light of Natural Reaſon not being able to determine it. So that in both Reſpects Jeſus Chriſt is the Firſt *Diſcoverer* of the other World. Reaſon indeed, by its own Light may diſcover ſo much of the Reaſonableneſs of the thing as to diſpoſe Men to the more ready Belief of it when it comes to be plainly reveal'd, but 'tis Revelation only that makes it Certain, and we believe by our *Faith* what we could never demonſtrate by our *Reaſon*. The old Philoſophers 'tis true would now and then talk of the other World, as a very probable Suppoſition, much after the ſame rate as ſome of the *New Ones* do of a World in the *Moon*, Problematically, and Conjecturally, but 'tis the Chriſtian only that has Aſſurance of a World to Come; and 'tis to his *Faith*, not his *Reaſon* or *Senſe*, that he is beholden for it.

So again Secondly, As to the *Nature* of a Future State, we believe in general that the Soul ſhall ſurvive the Body, and Subſiſt when ſeparated from it, but whether in a *Vehicle* or without one, whether ſhe ſhall retain her former Senſes, and whether any New ones ſhall be awaken'd in her, where ſhe ſhall be during the State of Separation, whether ſhe

ſhall go immediately to Heaven or Hell, or to ſome Common Repoſitory or place of Cuſtody, there to abide till the General Judgment; and if the latter of theſe, how deceas'd Spirits ſhall ſpend their time in thoſe Middle Manſions, and what Diſtinction there ſhall be between the Good and the Bad; whether they ſhall be diſtinguiſh'd by Place, or only by State and Condition, theſe are things which Exerciſe the *Thoughts* of ſome, and the *Paſſions* of others, which a great many Diſpute and Contend about, but which no Body *Knows*. So that Conſidering our Ignorance of the Soul's Abode, and Manner of being in the other World, the ſame may be ſaid of every well departed Spirit, that the Author to the *Hebrews* ſays of *Abraham*, *Heb.* 11. 8. that *when he was call'd to go out into a place which he ſhould after receive for an inheritance, he by Faith obey'd, and went out, not knowing whether he went.* Again, we believe there ſhall be a *Reſurrection*, but how the Dead ſhall be Rais'd, and with what Body they do come, that is, how their Bodies ſhall be Modify'd and Organiz'd, what their Powers and Capacities, and according to what Age, Bulk, and Stature they ſhall riſe; and how the Bodies of the Damn'd ſhall differ from the Bodies of the Saints, are things which (though defined by ſome School-men with great Boldneſs) we muſt all Confeſs our ſelves to be equally ignorant of, and that we know no more how, than when we ſhall riſe. And thus again we Believe there ſhall be a Heaven and a Hell, but where Hell is, whether in the Central parts of the Earth, or in the Air, or in ſome of the other Planets, or in the Ethereal Regions about the Sun and fixt Stars, what the Puniſhments are there; particularly whether its Fire be Material; and if ſo, what Immortal Fuel that muſt be which can Everlaſtingly

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feed its Hungry Flames; all this we know not any thing of, as I pray God we never may. But we are as ignorant of Heaven too, where it is, and what it is, and what its Felicities are; whether they conſiſt Chiefly in the Perfection of the Underſtanding or Will, in the Love or in the Viſion of God; and if in the Latter, how we ſhall ſee God, whether Senſibly or Intellectually; and if Intellectually, whether our Knowledge will be Sudden and Inſtantaneous, or (as a late Ingenious Writer more probably Contends) Eternally progreſſive and ever increaſing, we are much in the dark as to theſe and the like things relating to a Future World, in a double Darkneſs, wanting not only the Light of *Science*, but in great Meaſure, even that of *Faith* too, God having thought fit to reveal to us a Future State in General, but to leave the Particularities of it ſtill Seal'd up from our View, as Secrets reſerv'd to Himſelf. And ſo we are expreſly told by two Apoſtles, St. *Paul* tells us, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. that *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have enter'd into the Heart of Man the things which God has prepared for them that love him.* And St. *John* tells us, *Joh.* 3. 2. that *it does not yet appear what we ſhall be.* In vain therefore do we inquire, we are ignorant, and muſt be Content to be ſo till Death ſhall draw the Curtain, open to us a New Scene, and preſent to our View that Soveraign Good, and thoſe bright Glories which no Man can *See* and *Live*. That which at preſent is both more Poſſible and Neceſſary for us is (inſtead of Curious Reſearches) by emptying our Hearts of Worldly Deſires, and purifying them from Carnal Luſts, to prepare our Souls for a State of *Sight*, even that which is Beatific, and in the Mean time to reſt Contented with the more humble and obſcure one of *Faith*, as that

which

which the Infinitely Wiſe God has thought fitteſt for us, and is indeed more ſutable to our Preſent Circumſtances. Which brings me to the laſt Part of my Undertaking, which is

Thirdly, To offer ſuch Conſiderations as ſhall juſtify the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God in allotting this Latter State to Man while he is in this World. 'Tis Strange there ſhould be ever any Occaſion to Apologize for the Conduct of God, but there are Proud Spirits in the World who are as ready to Charge him Fooliſhly in this as in any other Inſtance of his Providence, and the rather becauſe it is a Check to their Curioſity, and a Mortification to their Proud Reaſon, which would have Nothing, much leſs ſuch great things as the Objects of the other World, Eclips'd from its View. This I fear is the true ground of their diſſatisfaction, but they pretend another, and ſuch as is taken from Religion, for which theſe Men have a ſtrange Kindneſs whenever it will help them to an Objection againſt it ſelf. For ſay they, if we muſt renounce (as you tell us) this World which we ſee; is it not fit we ſhould alſo have a Sight of the other World which is to Counterballance and outweigh it? Is there any Proportion between the Sight of this World and the bare Belief of the next? Ought not Seeing to be ſet againſt Seeing, to make the Scales hang even, that ſo we may make firſt a juſt Compariſon, and then a wiſe Choice? And why then does God keep us ſo in the Dark as to the things of another Life, when thoſe of this are ſet before us in ſo fair a Light, and require us to renounce a Viſible and a Senſible World for one which is behind the Curtain, and which we only *Believe*? Either let us be in the dark as to both Worlds, and ſo chuſe Blindfold, or if we ſee one of them, let the

the other be brought in View too. Thus the *Libertines*, and Profane Spirits of the Age are apt to Reaſon, or rather Mutiny againſt the Ways of God: But as Wiſdom will be ſure to be juſtified of her Children, and of her Enemies too, hereafter, ſo there are very good Reaſons at preſent to be aſſigned why God ſhould uſe this Diſpenſation towards Mankind.

As Firſt, *This Diſpenſation is moſt agreeable to the order of things in the Natural World*, wherein God's ordinary Method is to begin with what is leſs Perfect, and thence to advance to what is more Perfect. Thus in the firſt Formation of things we find that Chaos and Confuſion went before order, and Darkneſs was Elder Brother to Light. And Nature goes on in the ſame Courſe wherein it begun. For thus when in the Spring the Sun returns to Viſit and Comfort the deſolate Earth, the Trees bring forth firſt the Tender Bud, then the Bloſſom, then the Fruit, which alſo by Degrees arrives to its juſt Perfection. And the like our Saviour obſerves concerning the Production of Corn, *Mark* 4. 28. that *the Earth brings forth firſt the Blade, then the Ear, after that the full Corn in the Ear.* And thus again in the great Reſtitution of things we are told, that after the Diſſolution of this preſent Fabrick, there ſhall be a more Perfect and Glorious Syſtem rais'd, New Heavens and a New Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteouſneſs. And to go no further than our own Bodies, we find that of the two States which belong to them, the more Excellent is reſerv'd to be the laſt. For ſo the Apoſtle ranges them, 1 *Cor.* 15. 44, 46. *There is a Natural Body, and there is a Spiritual Body; Howbeit that was not firſt which is Spiritual, but that which is Natural, and afterward that which is Spiritual.* This is

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the Order of our Bodies, the leſs perfect of which is to Uſher in the more Perfect: In the mean time we ſerve our Firſt *Apprentiſhip* to Nature, in the dark Retirements of the Womb, before we are priviledg'd to ſee the Light of the Sun, and then too we have not our *Freedom* all at once, but are Children before we are Men. But now God is Uniform and Conformable in all his ways, and proceeds in the Methods of Grace by the ſteps of Nature. It is therefore reaſonable and decorous that the Oeconomy of Faith ſhould go before that of Viſion, as a leſs Perfect before a more Perfect State, that we ſhould ſee through this Glaſs darkly before we ſee clearly and Face to Face, and we have no more Cauſe to Complain that we now Walk by Faith and not by Sight, than that we have not now Spiritual, but Terreſtrial Bodies. Which yet is a thing Men are ſo far from Complaining of, that they are well pleaſed with them, and are willing to keep them as long as they can.

Secondly, *This Diſpenſation is moſt agreeable, as to the Nature of things, ſo to the Nature of Man, and his preſent Circumſtances in the World.* The Nature of Man in this Mortal State is not capable of any greater Light as to the things of another World than that of *Revelation*, nor of that neither in its fuller Degrees and brighter Communications. And accordingly there are many things relating to the other Life which God does not reveal to us, becauſe he cannot, not through any defect in Him, but in us, becauſe we cannot receive ſuch Revelations, becauſe indeed they would be no Revelations to us, becauſe we could not read the Book though he ſhould *unſeal* it; and therefore he does not, but keeps it faſt for the very ſame Reaſon that our Saviour Chriſt declined to impart many great

great things relating to himſelf and the Future State of the Chriſtian Church to his Diſciples, becauſe of their incapacity. *I have yet many things to ſay unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Joh.* 16. 12. And this is exactly our Caſe in reference to the things of another World, *we cannot bear them now.* Not even the Revelation of many of them, much leſs their open and naked Theory. Our preſent Faculties are both too dull to have a Sight of the Heavenly Glories, and too weak to indure ſuch a Sight if it might be had. Firſt too dull to have it. For this Sight muſt be either that of the *Senſe* or that of the *Mind.* But our Senſes are too Groſs for Objects ſo Refined, and our Underſtandings too Narrow for Objects ſo vaſt. And accordingly God who knows exactly the Proportion of both to his own Glorious Perfections has plainly told us that (whatever our Curioſity may aſpire to) he is not an Object for a Mortal View. *Thou canſt not ſee my Face, Exod.* 35. 20. ſays he to *Moſes*, when not Contented with Faith, he would have walk'd by Sight, *for there ſhall no Man ſee me and Live.* To the like purpoſe the Apoſtle who had been ſo far in the other World as not to know whether he had left his Body behind him or no, ſpeaking of God, tells us, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. that he *dwells in the Light which no Man can approach unto, whom no Man hath Seen, or can See.* The Glories of Heaven it ſeems are not only unſeen, but *inviſible*, and the Soul can no more ſee through her Body into the other World, than an Infant can ſee through his Mothers Womb into this. The ſhort is, theſe are not Objects either for Carnal Eyes, or for imbody'd Underſtandings, and as Fleſh and Blood cannot *inherit*, ſo neither can a Soul that is Cloathed with it *See* the Kingdom of God, becauſe indeed that would be in a Meaſure

ſure to inherit it, ſince even the ſight of ſuch Divine Objects cannot but be highly raviſhing, and I may ſay, *Beatific.* For which reaſon, as we cannot now *have* ſuch a Sight, ſo neither Secondly could we bear it if we had it. Mortality is too infirm to indure ſo much of Heaven upon Earth. So great a Light would dazzle our Eyes, confound our Underſtandings, deluge and overflow our Souls, and ſo raviſh and tranſport our Affections, that the Feebleneſs of our Nature being no longer able to ſupport it ſelf under ſuch high Tides of Paſſion, we ſhould not only be forc'd to cry out with the Amorous Spouſe in the *Canticles*, *Stay me with Flagons, Comfort me with Apples, for I am Sick of Love*, but ſhould even really Expire and Die; the diſproportionate and too prevailing force of the Divine Glories would break in with that Violence upon us as to diſſolve our Frame and melt us down into a State of Separation, ſo that *Mortality* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* 5. 4.) would really be *ſwallowed up of Life.* We know that a few Beams of this Excellent Glory (as St. *Peter* calls it) that ray'd forth through our Saviour's Body at the Transfiguration put his amazed Diſciples almoſt beyond their Senſes, they could ſleep undiſturb'd at the approaches of his Bloody Paſſion, but could not bear the Eſſayes of his Glorification. And St. *Paul* when rapt up into the Third Heaven was ſo little Himſelf there, that he knew not whether he was dead or alive, whether in or out of the Body. And what then would the full Diſplay of that aſtoniſhing Scene do, and how ſhould we be able to indure its Light and Grandeur! So that if we conſider only the *Nature* of Man, it appears very Neceſſary that God ſhould caſt a ſhade over the now inſupportable Glories of Heaven, at which the very

Angels

Angels themſelves are repreſented as Covering their Faces, and that we ſhould ſee them here no otherwiſe than through the Veil of *Faith*. I ſay the *Nature* of Man requires this; But do not alſo his preſent *Circumſtances* in the World require the ſame? Man is born for Society, being unable to live without it, and Society can ſubſiſt no longer than the great Wheel of Buſineſs, Trade, Mutual Traffick and Commerce goes round. But now ſhould God draw the Curtain and open to us the glittering Scenes of the other World, it would give an immediate arreſt to all the Motions of this, put a ſudden ſtop to all Buſineſs, and call Men off not only from the neceſſary *Affairs*, but Moral *Duties* too of Human Life, who when they ſhould be attending their proper Concerns upon Earth, would (with the Men of *Galilee*, *Acts* 1. 11.) be ſtaring and ſtand gazing up into Heaven. But neither will the preſent Circumſtances of Man permit this upon another Account. The Life of Man here is a State of Trial and Probation, he is now upon his Behaviour in order to a Better World, and a Sight of that World is part of his Reward. But now it is not fit that a Labourer ſhould have his Reward while he is doing his Work, much leſs ſuch a Reward as would hinder him from ever doing it. So that whether we Conſider the Nature of Man or his preſent Circumſtances, they both make it neceſſary that God ſhould uſe this Diſpenſation towards him, and we may Conclude from both, that though it be not Beſt in it *Self*, yet 'tis at preſent Beſt for *Him* that he ſhould Walk by *Faith*, not by *Sight*. But beſides,

Thirdly, God has alſo many Wiſe and Good Ends to ſerve by this Diſpenſation both in reference to the bettering the Moral State of Man, and the advancement

advancement of his own Honour and Glory. For by thus hiding the *Myſteries* of the other World from our ſight, he makes Man in the firſt place do a ſort of *Penance* for his Firſt irregular Curioſity and intemperate Thirſt after *Knowledge*, in deſiring the inlightning Fruit, and for aſpiring to be as Wiſe as his Maker. Again, by ſetting ſuch narrow Bounds to our Sight, God gives the more ſcope and compaſs to our Faith, which though (as has been remark'd before) it can abſolutely dwell with Science, yet, as not having ſo much room, cannot act ſo freely as when it has the whole Man to it ſelf. The leſs we know, the more intire is our Faith, and the darker the Object of it is, the more its own Vertue and Glory Shines. God therefore by ſhortning and Contracting our View gives us an Opportunity of raiſing the Worth and Merit of our Faith, which will contribute to *inlarge* our View too at the proper Seaſon for it, by intitling us to a higher Degree of the Beatific Viſion, according to our Saviour's Anſwer to St. *Thomas*, *Joh.* 20. 29. *Thomas, becauſe thou haſt ſeen me, thou haſt Believ'd: Bleſſed are they that have not ſeen, and yet have Believ'd.* By this means again God teaches us to depend upon him, to truſt in him, to acknowledge his Authority and Veracity, to have recourſe to him for further Light and Inſtruction, and in the mean while to ſet the greater Value upon thoſe Revelations he has already made to us, to exerciſe the Vertues of Patience, Contentedneſs, Divine Reſignation and Hope (for what a Man ſees what does he yet hope for) and to Submit our high Reaſonings, and caſt down our Towring Imaginations, and every thing that exalts it ſelf againſt the Wiſdom and Conduct of God, and to bring into Captivity every thought to the *Obedience of Faith*; in one word, to renounce

renounce the Light of our Reaſon, to follow the Clue of Revelation, and to deny our *Underſtandings*, which is as great, if not a greater Mortification than the Denial of our Wills. Again, Laſtly, God by thus darkning our Views takes the moſt Effectual Method to Correct our Pride, to inſtruct us in the moſt profound Humility, and to bring us to a ſober Senſe and right underſtanding of our ſelves. The way to Manage People whoſe Heads are diſtemper'd is to keep them in the *Dark*. And ſo God deals with us, he keeps us in the Dark, in perfect Ignorance of the things of another Life, that ſo by the advantage of Silence and Obſcurity he may compoſe and recollect our Spirits (which too much Light and Splendour would be apt to ſcatter and diſperſe) and ſo cool our Spiritual Fever, and reduce our Intellectual Pulſe to a moderate Temper, that ſo (as the Apoſtle expreſſes it *Rom.* 12. 3.) we may φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν think ſoberly, and as we ought to think, or be Wiſe unto Sobriety.

Theſe Conſiderations might be more at large ſet forth, and to them likewiſe many others added to ſhew the Reaſonableneſs of God's alloting the ſtate of Faith and not of Sight, to Man while he is in this World, but I think what has been offer'd may ſuffice to Account for the Diſpenſation, and to Convince all that will Conſider it, that Sight can no more conſiſt with the Condition of this preſent Life, than Faith can with that of the Next, and that therefore it is expedient we ſhould now *Walk* by Faith, as hereafter we ſhall *Reſt* in Viſion. And this notwithſtanding the forementiond Objection of thoſe who plead the Sight of the other World as neceſſary to Counterballance the Sight of this, to which the Anſwer is eaſie in few Words, that God may very juſtly require us to renounce a World which we See and Feel

for a World which we only Believe, ſuppoſing (which is the Caſe) that there be ſufficient Ground for ſuch our Faith, and that the Object Believ'd be of that importance as to Compenſate the want of higher Evidence.

And thus having given ſome Account of the Text, I ſhall now in ſhort make a Few Practical Reflections (by way of Inference) upon the latter Part of my Diſcourſe, and ſo Conclude.

And Firſt then, Since it has pleaſed the Wiſdom of God to allot to us a State of Faith, not of Sight, while we are in this World, this ſhould teach us *Humility*, a thing which highly becomes us as *Creatures*, but much more as Creatures under ſuch a low and imperfect Diſpenſation, as ſuch dark and hoodwink'd Creatures. *Be ye Cloathed with Humility*, ſays St. *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 5. and ſure we cannot appear in a more proper Habit, nor put on a more ſeaſonable and therefore more becoming Dreſs while we are in this State and Region of Mortality, this dark Vale of Tears, while we inhabit theſe Obſcure Houſes of Clay, while we wear this Corruptible Body that ſo preſſes down the Soul, this Body of our *Humiliation* (as the Apoſtle very emphatically ſtiles it, *Phil.* 3. 21.) that ſtands ſo much in our Light, and Eclipſes from our View no leſs than the whole State of the other World. If a little Knowledge be ſo apt to puff us up, ſure ſo great an Ignorance ſhould much rather Humble and Caſt us down.

Again, Secondly, If it be our preſent Lot to walk by Faith and not by Sight, then we ought to *Believe* though we do not *See*, and our not *Seeing* is no reaſonable Objection againſt our *Believing*. Not that we are to believe we know not *what*, or we know not *why*. No, Faith is ſo much an Act of Reaſon as to require that we underſtand the ſimple meaning

ing of the Propoſition we are to believe, and withal the Grounds of Credibility upon which it Challenges our Aſſent. So that the *Formal* Reaſon of Faith is a Viſible thing, and our not Seeing here is indeed an Objection againſt our Believing. But when I ſay it is not, my Meaning is, that whenſoever it appears to us that a thing is plainly and expreſly Reveal'd, we are to believe it upon the Credit of the Revealer, though we are not able in a *Scientific* way to Account for the Nature or Manner of it. For otherwiſe, beſides that we ſhall bar all the things of another World from being Objects of Revelation, ſince of theſe we have no Sight, what deference do we pay to God more than Man, if either we ſuppoſe that he cannot reveal Truths to us which we cannot Comprehend, or if we will not receive them if he does? We are therefore to Believe, though in this Senſe we do not See, unleſs we will ſuppoſe our ſelves to ſee every thing, and ſo make our own Underſtandings the *Meaſure* of all Truth. This I doubt will fall heavy upon the *Socinians* and *Libertines* of the Age, who will allow no Myſteries in Religion, demand a Philoſophic Reaſon for every thing, and will believe nothing but whoſe Bottom they can Sound and Fathom. But theſe Men anticipate that Viſion in this World which is to be the Priviledge of the next, and in the mean time Forget that they (as well as other Men) are to walk here by Faith, and not by Sight. Such intemperate *Curioſity*, and (as I may call it) *Hardineſs* of Underſtanding that rudely ruſhes on upon a Myſtery, without any Reverence to its awful Retirements, has done near as much Miſchief to Chriſtianity as utter *Infidelity* it ſelf. However I am ſure it is every whit as contrary to its Genius and Spirit. For that requires us to Captivate our Reaſon to the Obedience of Faith,

but theſe Men Captivate Faith to the Obedience of their Reaſon, and thereby become not only ill Chriſtians, but Enemies to the Chriſtian Religion. For (as Monſieur *Abbadie* to this purpoſe well obſerves) *the Chriſtian Faith has two Sorts of Enemies, the Infidels who attack it on that ſide whereon it Shines, and the Preſumptuous who ſhew no reſpect to its Sacred Obſcurity. Thoſe who deny all, and thoſe who would know all.* And 'tis hard to tell which of theſe Enemies are the worſt, though in one reſpect we may juſtly apprehend more danger from the Latter, ſince the *Infidels* are without the Church, whereas the *Socinians* (I'm afraid) begin to have a Party within it.

Traitè de la Verité de la Religion Chreſtienne. Part 2. Pag. 422.

Again, Thirdly and Laſtly, Since our Preſent State in reference to the Life to Come is to Walk by Faith not by Sight, this ought to make us very Modeſt and Reſerv'd in prying into the Secrets of a Future World, and will ſerve greatly to Condemn the Conduct of thoſe who either have recourſe to Spirits for Intelligence, or who employ their Study about the Philoſophy of the Separate State, about Angels and Immaterial Subſtances, intruding into *thoſe things which they have not ſeen*, nor can ſee, *vainly puffed up* ('tis to be fear'd) *by their Fleſhly Mind.* We ought rather to apply our ſelves to the great and Neceſſary Duties of Chriſtian Life, and to the Study of ſuch Practical Truths as have a tendency to promote it, as things that are better ſuted and proportion'd to the preſent Capacity of our Minds, and that are withal more neceſſary to be known, and wherein Conſiſts the whole Duty of Man. In one word therefore let us take Care to Believe and Live well here, and be Contented to See and Know Hereafter.

Now to God the Father, &c.

A Diſ-

A Diſcourſe Concerning Charity to the Poor.

1 JOH. iij. 17.

But whoſo hath this World's Good, and ſeeth his Brother hath need, and Shutteth up his Bowels of Compaſſion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him!

THere are ſome Particular Duties that Concern only ſome Certain States and Orders of Men, and there are others that are Common to all Men. And of thoſe that are Common there are ſome that may lie *equally* upon Men, and others that lie *unequally*, obliging ſome in a greater Meaſure than they do others. Of this latter Kind is the Duty implied in the Text. It is a Duty of a *Common*, but *Unequal* Obligation. There needs no Special Authority or Commiſſion for the Exerciſe of it, as in the Duties of the Firſt Rank, ſuppoſe of a Magiſtrate or a Miniſter, a Natural Power or Ability will be ſufficient, which makes it no Particular, but a Common Duty. But then though all Men are Obliged to it that have ſo much as a Natural Poſſibility or Power, yet ſome are more ſo than others, becauſe they have a greater Power; which makes it though a Common, yet an unequally Obliging Duty. For though Charity, as it ſignifies Good Will to our Neighbour, be a Duty of an Equal as well as Univer-

ſal Obligation, becauſe here every one is, or by the Grace of God may be equally able (to be *able* here being no more than to be *willing*) yet as 'tis taken for that particular inſtance of it which is expreſs'd by Acts of Bounty and Liberality, commonly diſtinguiſh'd by the Name of *Alms-giving*, ſo 'tis more peculiarly the Duty of the *Rich* and the *Wealthy*, who are in a more eminent manner Obliged, becauſe better able to perform it. And who if they do not, muſt not pretend either to the Practice or to the Rewards of Religion, muſt neither ſet up for Lovers of God, nor expect to be the Objects of his Love and Favour. Thoſe indeed that are truly *Charitable* we may well preſume to be *Religious*, to be Lovers of God as well as Lovers of Men, and to have a Stock of Devotion as well as of Pity and Goodneſs. *But whoſo hath this World's Good, and ſeeth his Brother hath need, and ſhutteth up his Bowels of Compaſſion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him!*

The Words lie in a Form obviouſly reſolvible into this Single Propoſition, *That he that is well Able and can conveniently Relieve the Poor in their Neceſſities, and will not, has not the Love of God dwelling in him.* Thus in groſs. But becauſe this latter Clauſe *(How dwelleth the Love of God in him)* may admit of more Senſes than one, and becauſe upon the right and full underſtanding of it at all turns, it may be convenient before we go any further to explain and ſettle the Signification of this Fundamental Phraſe, that ſo the Subject of the following Diſcourſe may be the more diſtinct, and we may have a Clearer *White* for our *Mark.*

The great Queſtion here is, What we are here to underſtand by the Love of God. And were one to Conſider the Words only as they ſtand ſingly and abſolutely, without relation to the Context, this would

would be no Queſtion neither. For then I think by the Love of God we ſhould upon the firſt hearing of the Words apprehend either that Love whereby a Man Loves God, taking the Term (God) *Objectively*, or that Love whereby he is belov'd of him, taking the ſame Term *Subjectively*, or perhaps Both. And thus when St. *John* ſays, *How dwells the Love of God in him*, it would ſignify as much to us as if he had ſaid, How can it be imagin'd that either he ſhould Love God, or that God ſhould Love him! Thus I ſay the Words ſeem to Sound, and thus I believe they are commonly taken.

Now not to exclude either of theſe Senſes becauſe they are both of them true, and of Conſequence to be ſpoken to, I think however that there may be yet another Senſe no leſs true in it ſelf, and (if we regard the Context) more likely to be intended by St. *John*. And that is by the Love of God here to underſtand that Kind of Compaſſion, or a Counterpart of that Love and Goodneſs which the Lord Jeſus expreſs'd towards us in dying for us, and which in imitation of his Example he requires from us towards one another. So that the Love of God in this Senſe will be the ſame with the Love of Men, that is, Chriſtian Charity, and *how dwells the Love of God in him*, will be as much as how is there ſuch a Love in him as was in God, and as he requires to be in us; which though indeed the Love of Men, is yet here called the Love of God, becauſe ſo highly Exemplify'd by God in dying for the World.

That this is the ſtricter and more immediate Senſe of the Words we can no longer doubt, if we regard the Occaſion that introduces them. St. *John* in the Verſe before had commended the Excellency of the Love of God from that Signal Teſtimony of it in his laying down his Life for us, and had withal

Concluded thence that we ought in imitation of ſo Divine a Pattern to do the like for one another in Proportionable Caſes. *Hereby* (ſayes he) *perceive we the Love of God, becauſe he laid down his Life for us, and we ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren.* Then it follows by way of Contrariety, *But whoſo hath this Worlds Good*, &c. As much as to ſay, if God has expreſs'd ſo much Love to us, as to lay down his Life for us, and we in Conformity to his Example ought alſo to lay down ours for the Brethren, how ſhort then of what God has done and we ought to do is the Practice of thoſe, who will not part with ſome of their *Abundance* to relieve their poor Brethren in their *Neceſſities*! We ought if occaſion be to part with our very *Lives*, but if we will not ſo much as part with ſome of our *Money*, if we will not open our Purſes for them for whom the Son of God was pleaſed to open his Side, nor feed them with a little Bread, for whoſe Life and Nouriſhment he was Content to give his Body and Blood, how can it be once thought that the leaſt Spark of that Divine Fire which glow'd ſo ſtrongly in our Saviour's Breaſt dwells in ours, that we have any thing of that Love for one another that he had for us all; and how plain and unqueſtionable is it that we have not! How do we imitate God, or Act by that Spirit of Goodneſs and Kindneſs by which he became Incarnate and Suffer'd Death for us! And thus *how dwelleth the Love of God in us!*

But beſides the Chain of the Context, there is a Parallel Text in St. *John* that will further Confirm our Interpretation of this. As he ſays here, that neglecting the needs of our Brethren is an Argument that we have not the Love of God dwelling in us, ſo elſewhere he ſays, *Joh.* 4. 12. that *if we do love one another God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected*

fected in us. *His Love*, that is, that ſame Love of God towards Men, which moved him to ſend his Son to be a Propitiation for their Sins, as appears from what goes before. Which Love of his is *Copied out*, *Imitated* and *Perfected* by us when we are kind and loving to our Fellow Creatures, even as the Sufferings of Chriſt are ſaid to be *Perfected* by us, when we Suffer after his Example, as Dr. *Hammond* expreſſes it in his Paraphraſe upon that Text. And ſo on the Contrary, when we do not ſhew this Brotherly Kindneſs, then this Love of God to Mankind is not Copied out, imitated or perfected by us, and ſo may be ſaid not to *dwell* in us, as in the Words before us.

This may ſerve to ſhew the Love of God in the Text to be at leaſt truly if not principally meant of *Charity*, that Tranſcendent Charity which was ſo Senſibly and Convincingly Expreſs'd in the Death and Paſſion of Chriſt for us. So that we have now gain'd another Senſe to be added to the other Two (for I do not intend to exclude them neither) and all put together will amount to thus much, that the Man of ſufficient Ability, but no Will to Relieve the Poor, has neither Charity or Good Will to Men dwelling in him, nor any true Love to God, nor is he belov'd by him. There are therefore Three Things here ſuppoſed to be ſaid of the Perſon of this Character, and ſo our Firſt General Propoſition more diſtinctly unfolded reſolves into theſe Three.

Firſt, *That our Rich Miſer that has Ability enough, but no Heart to Relieve the Poor, has no true Chriſtian Charity dwelling in him.*
Secondly, *That he has no true Love to God.*
Thirdly, *That neither is he belov'd by him.*

Theſe

Theſe are the Propoſitions I intend to ſpeak to from the Words, but before I do ſo, there are ſome qualifying Expreſſions in the Text that I muſt take Notice of for the Clearer handling of them. Whereof the Firſt is,

Whoſo hath this World's Good, that is, I ſuppoſe, he who by the good Providence and favourable Indulgence of God is in full and plentiful Circumſtances, who abounds and overflows with Worldly Bleſſings, in one Word, the *Rich* Man. But becauſe (*Rich*) is a Term of ſome uncertainty, and accordingly liable to Miſtake, which would be here of bad Conſequence where there is ſo much depending upon it, this being one of the *Cardinal* Expreſſions of the Text upon which the great Streſs and Weight of it reſts, I think it Neceſſary briefly to ſtate the Notion of Riches, and to ſhew who is properly to be underſtood by a *Rich Man*.

A Name which we no ſooner hear but there Commonly riſes in our Minds an Idea of one that has a large Eſtate and Great Poſſeſſions either in Money, Land, or ſome other Valuable Property. *Great*, not relatively Conſider'd or with Proportion to the Condition of the Owner (whoſe Circumſtances are ſeldom taken into the Account) but Abſolutely regarded, or compared with the Poſſeſſions of other Men. We don't uſe to trouble our ſelves with the Conſideration of the Man's Circumſtances, 'tis ſufficient that he has ſuch a great Eſtate to call him a Rich Man, and we look no further. Now though Greatneſs of Eſtate may make a Rich Man in a *Natural* Senſe, yet certainly in a *Moral* Eſtimation to be Rich is a *Relative* thing, and ſignifies not the having that which is a great deal in it ſelf, but which is ſo to him that has it, with reſpect to his Condition, Circumſtances and Occaſions. And he

is

is truly the Rich Man, not that *has* a great deal, but that can *ſpare* a great deal; and he is Richeſt, not that has ſimply and abſolutely Moſt, but that has moſt to Spare; not that has the greateſt *Eſtate*, but the greateſt *Superfluity*. For we'll ſuppoſe two Men, one that has indeed a great Eſtate, but at the ſame time, either by reaſon of his Quality or ſome Eminent Station that he holds either in the Church or State, ſuch great Occaſions, that he can Save little or nothing out of it, having but juſt enough to bear out his Neceſſary Part. Another again that has a far leſs Eſtate, but who withal has by far Fewer Occaſions, Lives Privately and within himſelf, and ſo can ſave a great deal out of his little. The Queſtion is which of theſe is the Richer Man. The Firſt no doubt Popularly ſpeaking and in a Natural Senſe, as having the greateſt Eſtate; but ſure Morally ſpeaking the Latter, becauſe he has more in Proportion to his Occaſions than the other has in Proportion to his, that is, he has more to *him* though not Abſolutely ſo much, and ſo has a greater Superfluity, though a leſs Income. This I take Notice of, that thoſe who are Rich only in the Second Senſe may not think themſelves unconcerned in what St. *John* ſays of him that *has this World's Good*, merely becauſe they are not Men of great Eſtates, though otherwiſe Never ſo abounding with regard to their more private Circumſtances, and leſs craving Occaſions. So much for the firſt qualifying Expreſſion. The Next is,

And ſeeth his Brother hath need; This is well added becauſe it meets with the Pretence that is commonly pleaded by Uncharitable Men. They pretend Ignorance of their Neighbour's Neceſſities, and when the diſtreſſed Supplicants would make them better Known, they think it enough to diſcharge them-

hemſelves of their troubleſome Gueſts and their Duty too, to tell them, that the World is full of Cheats, and that there are a great many Counterfeits about the Country, and they have no Aſſurance but that they are of that Number, and therefore they think it neither Prudent nor Charitable to give at ſuch Uncertainties. And I do not deny but that in ſome Caſes this may be true, though withal I queſtion not but that too many Cover over their real Covetouſneſs and Hard-heartedneſs with this Veil of pretended Prudence. However to obviate all Shifts and Excuſes St. *John* takes away this old Refuge, by ſuppoſing his Rich Man whom he afterwards Charges with Uncharity for not relieving his Neceſſitous Brother, to ſee and be ſufficiently ſatisfy'd and aſſured that he *is in need.* After which it follows,

And ſhutteth up his Bowels of Compaſſion from him, that is, that ſtifles thoſe common Movements of Pity, thoſe tender Relentings, thoſe inward Stirrings of Humanity which ariſe even in the moſt Cruel and Inſenſible Breaſts, and would even *Mechanically* incline them to Acts of Mercy and Charity, if they would but ſtand Neuter, and leave Nature to her own Workings. But he will not, but ſtrives againſt them, fortifies his yielding Spirit, and induſtriouſly hardens himſelf both againſt his own Compaſſion and the Miſeries of the Poor Supplicant, is deaf to his Complaints, blind to the Marks of his Poverty, and *Shuts* firſt his *Heart*, then his *Purſe*, and then his *Door* againſt him.

But if this be his *Behaviour*, what is his *Religion*, or where is it, or to what purpoſe ſerves it, or what is himſelf or others the better for it, or how ſhall we believe he has any, and particularly let me ask him St. *John*'s Queſtion, *How dwelleth the Love of God in him?*

And

And First, How dwelleth the Love of God in him, according to the First Sense of the Love of God, as it denotes true Christian Charity! Can such a one pretend to any thing of this? 'Tis most sure that he justly cannot, and unless his Forehead be as hard as his Heart, sure he will not. But if he does, let him but Consider what the *Nature* and what the *Measure* of Charity is. As for the Nature of Charity, there is Nothing more plain and undisputed, since all the World understands by it such a Habit or Temper of Mind as disposes a Man to wish well and do well to all his Fellow Creatures according to their several Needs, and his own Opportunities. Wherein it is at once distinguish'd from, and advanc'd above the Vertue of *Justice*, which is concern'd no further than to render Men what they have a Civil Right to, and can legally Claim as their Due. Whereas by Charity we mean something more than paying Reckonings, and striking off Scores. 'Tis not only to do Men Right, but to do them Good, not only that which the Law requires, but which Reason dictates, not only what they can Challenge, but what they Need. This is the *Nature* of Charity. Now as for the *Measure* of it I find the Scripture makes it twofold. *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy Self*; *Lev.* 19. 18. This is the Measure of the old Law. To which our Saviour adds a New one, *Joh.* 13. 34. *A new Commandment give I unto you that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* So then we are to love one another, First, as we love our selves, that is with the same kind Affection and Benevolence, and in all the Reality, Cordialness, Sincerity and Constancy of it, having a Fellow-Sense with our Brethren in every thing, rejoycing in their Happiness, and Sympathizing with them in their Afflictions, and not only doing no more *against* them than

than we would be willing they ſhould do againſt us, but alſo being ready to do as much *for* them, as we would be willing they ſhould do for us. Secondly, As Chriſt Jeſus lov'd us all, that is, with that Noble and Generous, diſintereſted and unſelfiſh kind of Love which our Tender Redeemer had, when for us Men, and for our Salvation he came down from Heaven and Suffer'd upon Earth, and did ſuch things for us as Angels Conſider with Wonder, and Devils with Envy, ſuch as our Invention could never Contrive, ſuch as our Hope could never look for, and ſuch as our Faith can even now hardly Believe, but is ever now and then apt to break forth into the Language of the Surprized Virgin, *How can theſe things be!* Why thus alſo ought we to love one another, with the moſt Heroick and Divine Affection, ſo as to be ready to Sacrifice even our very *Lives* for the ſake of our Brethren, as it is in the Verſe before the Text, *Hereby perceive we the Love of God, becauſe he laid down his Life for us, and we ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren.*

But now if this be Charity and the Meaſure of it, how Infinitely ſhort does he come of it, and with what Face can he pretend to it, who has this World's Good, and ſees his Brother in Need, and yet ſhuts up his Bowels of Compaſſion from him! For is this to be kindly Affected towards him, and to bear a hearty good Will to him? Is this to love him as *himſelf*, and to be as ſenſible of, and as Concern'd for his Intereſt as he is for his own? Do we uſe to ſerve our dear ſelves at this rate, or would we be ſo treated by others? No, the Man loves himſelf a little otherwiſe, it being only upon a Miſtaken Suppoſition of Self-advantage that he thus uſes his diſtreſſed Brother. But then I ask again, is this to love his Brother as *himſelf*? Is it, when he ſets himſelf and his

his own ſuppoſed Intereſt ſo far before that of his Brother, as rather then break a round Sum, or diminiſh never ſo little from a Plentiful Store (though it be like taking a Drop out of the Ocean) rather than put himſelf to the leaſt inconvenience, though it be no more than even the very Trouble of Giving, (for that alſo I have Known to be the Caſe) to let a poor deſtitute Creature, and perhaps a Perſon of much greater Worth than himſelf either languiſh and periſh before his Eyes, or ſigh on in a Life of ſuch Extremity as is worſe than Death! If this be to *have* Charity, what is it to be *without* it, and who but a Mere *Devil* can poſſibly want it? I ſay a Mere Devil, for I can ſee nothing more but a Spirit of Malice, and taking delight in the Miſeries of Men that can be added to this moſt wretched indifferency concerning their Welfare, which certainly is as far remov'd from true Charity, as it is from that Love which every one bears to himſelf. And yet this is all that Men of this Complexion have to ſay for themſelves, and 'tis the very Plea they commonly make. They ſay, and they very Solemnly thank God for it, that they are in Charity with all the World, meaning that they bear no Body any *Malice* or *Ill Will*. And many an Old Trembling Miſer has Repoſed himſelf upon this ſorry Crutch, and very gravely Comforted himſelf with this Formal Proteſtation upon his Dying Bed, and ſo gone to the Devil with good Satisfaction. But this is to prove one's Self a good Chriſtian becauſe one is not a Devil. For when all's done, that's the beſt that can be ſaid of ſuch a Wretch, He is *not a Devil*; but to allow him to be a good Man would be too great a Reproach to Human Nature.

Much leſs then can he pretend to the Charities of a *Suffering God*, who has not ſo much as the Compaſſions

paſſions of a good-Natur'd Man. The Charity of Chriſt went ſo far as to lay down his Life for us, and (as little as we think of it) that's the Charity which by Vertue of his New Commandment we owe one another, even to lay down our Lives for our Brethren, when there is a due Occaſion for ſo dear a Sacrifice. But can it be expected that *he* ſhould ever riſe up to that Noble and Divine Pitch of Charity, that has not a Heart ſo much as to give an *Alms*? What! will that Man ever part with his *Life*, the Foundation of all his Temporal Enjoyments, that will not ſo much as part with a little *Money* for the Relief of thoſe whoſe Wants he ſees and knows, but neither Feels nor Conſiders? Will he ever Sacrifice *himſelf* for his Brother, after the Example of our Generous Lord, that will not do ſo much, I will not ſay, as miſs a Meal, or part with a Convenience for his Sake, for that would imply ſome Trouble in it, but even to ſpare him ſome of his Overflowings, ſome of his *Burthen*, ſomething of that Abundance which breaks his Sleep, diſtracts his Head, and is even a trouble to him to Poſſeſs? No certainly, he that loves *Self* ſo much even in its *Excrements* and Superfluities, will be ſure to love it too well in its Fund and Bottom *(Life)* ever to be guilty of ſo Expenſive a Charity. But where then is that Excellent Spirit of Goodneſs, Love and Divine *Philanthropy* which was in the Incarnate Word, the Suffering, Bleeding, Dying Redeemer of the World? Not in our Covetous Wretch to be ſure, who refuſing to Communicate a little of his Worldly Subſtance to thoſe for whom our Lord Jeſus Sacrific'd his Life, ſhews himſelf to be at the furtheſt diſtance from the Temper and Practice of that Divine Lover, and that he has not the leaſt Portion of his Excellent Spirit reſting upon him. And indeed he may as well pretend to

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the Purity of an Angel, as to the Charity of a Chriſtian. However perhaps he may make it up ſome other way, and particularly in the way of *Devotion* and *Religion*. But beſides that this would ſignify nothing without Chriſtian Charity, I ſhall now go on to ſhew,

Secondly, *That as he wants* that, *ſo he has no true Love to God neither*. This is the Common Retreat, and laſt Reſerve of Covetous Rich Men. They are too Senſible of their want of Love to Men to make any great boaſts on that ſide, and 'twould be to no purpoſe if they ſhould, when their whole Behaviour is ſuch a viſible Proof of the Contrary. But then you ſhall have them pretend highly to the Love of God, and ſet up for Men of Extraordinary Devotion and Piety, for no other Reaſon that I can imagine but only becauſe 'tis the Cheaper and leſs Expenſive Service of the two. But not to Mind theſe Men of a ſaying in St. *John* which none are more concern'd in than themſelves, *He that loveth not his Brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen? Joh.* 4. 20. Nor that Acts of Charity are alſo Acts of Religion, according to thoſe two remarkable places of Scripture, *to do good and to Communicate forget not, for with ſuch Sacrifices God is well pleas'd*, *Heb.* 13. 16. and *Pure Religion and Undefiled*, &c. *Jam.* 1. 27. and that therefore 'tis to no purpoſe to talk of being Religious without them; nor yet of that Expreſſion of our Saviour, *Mat.* 25. 45. *In as much as ye did it not to one of the leaſt of theſe, ye did it not to me*; a Paſſage which will hereafter Eternally ſtop the Mouths of all thoſe pretended Votaries to the Perſon of Chriſt, who yet ſhew no regard to his poor Members, and therefore ought as much to ſilence them Now; I ſay not to argue with them upon theſe Meaſures which yet are ſufficient to Caſt

and Condemn them, I would only know of them what they mean by the Love of God, or with what ſort of Love it is that they Love him. Not I preſume with Love of *Benevolence*; For ſince they will not beſtow it upon their Fellow-Creatures, whoſe Wants and Miſeries render'd them but too proper Objects of it, ſure they will not pretend to beſtow it upon the Bleſſed God, whoſe Perfect and Uncreateable Happineſs makes him utterly uncapable of, becauſe it ſets him Infinitely above ſuch a Love. By the Love of God therefore they muſt mean (if they underſtand either Senſe or themſelves) Love of *Deſire*; That they ſeek Union with God as their true and Soveraign Good, as their End and Beatific Object, and that their general Deſire of Happineſs is fix'd and lodg'd in him as the real Cauſe of it. But now if they do indeed thus Love God, then ſince God has ſo abundantly promiſed not only many great Rewards, but even *Himſelf* as *the* great Reward to thoſe that Conſider and Relieve the Neceſſities of the Poor, how comes it to paſs that when they Know their Wants, and are well able to Relieve them, yet they will not? Do not theſe Men plainly prefer their Money before the Enjoyment of God, whom they would rather loſe for ever, than be for the Preſent a little the *Poorer* for his Sake! And is this to Love God, to Love him as God, with a Love Worthy of him, or that ſhall be thought Worthy to enjoy him, or indeed to receive the leaſt Reward from him, I ſay is it to Love God, to value him at ſuch a Rate, to Poſtpone him ſo far to the things of the World as to be unwilling to lay out a little Money for ſo vaſt a Purchaſe, to be at a little Charge to have the Eternal Enjoyment of ſo Soveraign a good? If this be to Love God, then *Judas* loved Chriſt when he held the Scale ſo uneven between

tween him and the World as to let him be outweigh'd by Thirty Pieces of Silver. But theſe Men I ſuppoſe will not ſay that *Judas* was a true Lover of Chriſt, and with what Modeſty then can they aſſume the Title of Lovers of God, whom they equally *undervalue*, though for want of Opportunity and Capacity they do not equally *Betray*? But we need not be further nice upon the Matter, 'tis viſible to the Eye without *Meaſuring* it, that the Religion of theſe Men does not riſe one jot higher than their Charity, and tho' they make greater Pretences to the Love of God than to the Love of Men, 'tis plain they love one no better than the other, and as plain that they love their Money better than both, which it ſeems they would much rather keep than either Relieve the Poor, or enjoy their Maker. And *how* then *dwelleth the Love of God in them*? 'Tis indeed almoſt enough to make a Man Sick of Religion to hear ſuch Men pretend to it. Talk of Loving God? Their Money they mean, for they love nothing elſe that I know of, and that they *Idolize*, Sacrificing their Affections to it here, and their Souls to it for an *Eternal Hereafter*. For this it will come to, and this will be the Concluſion of him who has this World's Good, and ſees his Brother has Need, and ſhuts up his Bowels of Compaſſion from him. Which brings me to Conſider that as ſuch a One has no true Chriſtian Charity dwelling in him, nor any true Love to God, ſo neither,

Thirdly, *Is he Beloved by him.* Here methinks I might be Excuſed all further Trouble upon this Part, even in the Judgment of our Covetous Rich Man himſelf, who however he may Uſurp the Character of a *Lover* of God when he wants Charity to his Brother, yet one would think ſhould never abuſe himſelf with a Conceit of being the *Object* of God's

Love and Favour when he wants both the Former. For is it Conceivable that God ſhould Love him that has neither Charity to Men, his Fellow Creatures, nor Love to Himſelf, his Creator? Can God poſſibly Love a Creature ſo Irregular in his Affections, ſo degenerate even from himſelf, ſo far alienated from the Divine Life, ſo wholly ſubdued to that of Senſe, ſo inamour'd of a little glittering Clay, and ſo all over devoted to the World as to make a God of it, and ſerve it with that intireneſs of Zeal and Affection which He that is ſo can only Challenge? That is, in ſhort, can God Love an *Idolater?* For ſuch the Apoſtle tells us every Covetous Man is. But beſides, can we ſuppoſe it poſſible that God (as much Love as he is) ſhould love a Creature ſo utterly unlike himſelf, and who is of a Nature ſo little reſembling his own? What, can God, who is ſuch a Good, Bountiful, Self-Communicative, Self-diffuſive, univerſalized Being, that out of Love Created a World, and out of greater love Redeem'd it, even at the Price of his Son's Blood, I ſay can ſuch a Noble Generous Being as this, love one that is of the quite oppoſite Character, that is altogether as Strait, Contracted, Selfiſh and Illiberal; and that is ſo far from laying down his Life for his Brother's Good, that he will not ſo much as Sacrifice ſome of his Superfluous Dirt, (not to ſay the pleaſure of a Meal or a Bottle) to his greateſt Extremity? And is it poſſible for God to have any Love or Kindneſs for ſuch a Wretch as this? It would be in vain for ſuch a one to have recourſe to the Infinite Goodneſs and Love of God, for the more loving God is, the leſs lovely will ſuch a Creature appear to him, becauſe the more *unlike* him, and conſequently the leſs Worthy of his Love. Reaſon therefore will Warrant us to Conclude that he ſhall not have it, and ſo will Scripture

Scripture too, which in expreſs Terms declares that God hates the Covetous; For ſo the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 10. 3. *The Wicked boaſts of his Heart's deſire, and bleſſeth the Covetous whom the Lord abhors.* We may therefore put St *John*'s Queſtion concerning ſuch a one in this laſt Senſe as well as in the two former, *How dwelleth the Love of God in him?*

But if the Love of God does not dwell in him that does not impart of what is his own, what ſhall we then ſay of thoſe who wrongfully invade or detain what belongs to others! Thoſe particularly who defraud poor Labourers of their Hire, who oppreſs and grind the Poor inſtead of relieving them, and above all thoſe who Corrupt and Abuſe Publick Benefactions and Places of Hereditary Charity, ſuch as *Hoſpitals* and *Almes-Houſes*——. I ſay what ſhall we ſay of thoſe Birds of Prey which turn theſe Publick Benefactions into private Advantages, and raiſe ample Preferments for themſelves out of a Common Charity. Truly I know not what to ſay of them better than what St. *Jude* ſays of another ſort of Wicked Men, that *they are Spots in our Feaſts of Charity, feeding themſelves without Fear*, and I can hardly forbear going on with the reſt of the Character.

But to return to our Rich Covetous Men, I think after all this I need not go to prove to them that Almes-giving is a Duty particularly incumbent upon them, ſince without it they have neither Chriſtian Charity, nor any true Love to God, nor are beloved by him. For do not theſe Conſiderations ſufficiently bind it upon them, both in point of Conſcience, and in point of Intereſt too? But where are the Rich Men that have a due Senſe of their Obligations in this Matter? I muſt needs ſay that though they are the moſt *Able*, and ſo the moſt *Obliged*, yet they are the leaſt *Willing*, and that generally ſpeak-

ing they do the leaſt Good of any ſort of Men in the World. And they have got a Morality among them ſuitable to their Practice. They generally think that if they are not of the Number of thoſe I laſt ſpoke of, if they do not wrong any Body, but are Juſt in their Dealings, and pay every one their own, 'tis at their Liberty whether they will do any Works of Mercy and Charity or not, and that they may make as much of themſelves, and as little of others as they pleaſe. But beſides that by the Tenor of this whole Diſcourſe it appears that they have not this Liberty, let me further tell them, that there is not that difference between *Charity* and *Juſtice* that they imagine. There is indeed this difference between them, that the Object of my Juſtice has a Right to demand, as well as I an Obligation to do, whereas the Object of my Charity has no ſuch Right. But then let me tell thoſe that plead this, that though this makes a great Difference in a Court of Juſtice, yet it makes none at all in the Court of Conſcience, they being as much bound by the Laws of Chriſt to do acts of Charity as acts of Juſtice. The Obligation is the ſame on their ſide, though the Right be not the ſame on the other ſide, which is a Difference that Concerns the *Object* of Charity only, and not the *Beſtower* of it, who gets nothing by the Diſtinction.

For after all I would fain know whether Acts of Charity are not as much commanded by the Religion of Chriſt, and made as Neceſſary to Salvation as Acts of Juſtice! And if they are, what does it ſignifie that they cannot be Claim'd as a Right by thoſe to whom they are due, nor Extorted by *Forms* of *Law*? Are they the leſs obliging in *Conſcience*? Surely No. And how then thoſe who make Conſcience of being Juſt, and would by no means play the Knave,

Knave, ſhould yet ſatisfie themſelves in living ſo wholly to themſelves, and doing no good to thoſe whoſe Needs and whoſe Prayers too beſpeak their Charity, is a Myſtery every one has not Head enough to Comprehend.

But why do I reaſon with Men who want not ſo much to be *Diſcours'd*, as to be *Awaken'd*? and to this purpoſe I would only deſire them to conſider with me the Parable of the Rich Man in the Goſpel, (*Luke* 16. 19.) which if well minded, is enough to make all the Rich Miſers upon Earth to Tremble. *There was a certain Rich Man, &c.* ſays the Text. But it does not ſay that he was inrich'd by the Goods of others; he is not charged with Injuſtice, or Oppreſſion, or Extortion, or Adultery, nor with any other ſort of Debauchery, no not ſo much as with any Intemperance in the uſe of his good things, as far as the Health and good State of his Body was concern'd. No, 'tis only ſaid of him, That *he was cloathed in Purple and fine Linnen, and fared ſumptuouſly every Day*, and that he ſuffered poor *Lazarus* to lie unregarded at his Gate. He it ſeems was one of thoſe good honeſt Men (as they call them) that liv'd well, and kept a good Table, and were kind to their Friends, (that is, to thoſe who don't need it) and to themſelves, and that's all. He was (for ought that appears to the contrary) harmleſs and inoffenſive, did no body any hurt, but would eat and drink well, live ſoft and warm, and wear fine Cloaths, and (let the World go how it would) be ſure to take care of one, but concerning himſelf no further, and never thought of doing any good, or of communicating, even out of his Superfluity, to thoſe who were in Diſtreſs. This is his Character, and the worſt of it, and yet the next News that we hear of him is, that he is in Hell and in Torment. And is this the

end of a Man, otherwiſe Juſt and Innocent, merely becauſe he was wanting in Works of Charity? What then do our Rich Miſers think will become of them? And how can they chuſe but conclude from hence that 'tis expected they ſhould do good with what they have as well as forbear doing hurt, and that if they are not *Charitable*, they may go to Hell with all their *Juſtice* and *Sobriety*.

Nor is *any* Charity ſufficient. They ought not only to give to the Poor, but to give *liberally*, and as the Apoſtle ſays, 1 *Tim.* 6. 18. to be *Rich in good Works*, or elſe alſo *how dwells the Love of God in them*? For who ſhould be liberal and open-handed if not they to whom Heaven has been ſo? And for what end has God given them ſuch Plenty, but that they ſhould do good with it, and be helpful to thoſe who are in hard Circumſtances, in Proportion to their Ability? Rich Men are under a great Miſtake here alſo. They think if they do but now and then give an Alms at their Doors, and with a little Money or a Meals Meat relieve a preſent actual Want, they have done a notable piece of Charity, and made God their Debtor. And perhaps he might be ſo to another of leſs Ability, but ſure not to them, who as they have Abundance, ſo they ought to abound in their Alms accordingly; not only ſatisfie a preſent Want, but put Men into a condition of *not wanting*. Not that theſe Meaſures are to be uſed at a Venture, and to all Comers, but with Choice and Diſcretion, and where they meet with proper Objects. And ſuch a good Man that had much Wealth would diligently ſeek out for, firſt among his Poor Relations, if he has any ſuch, then among his Friends and Neighbours, and then among thoſe of the beſt Merit and Character abroad, as far as his Sphere would well extend: And where-ever he

he found a due Object for his Charity (ſuch as a decay'd Gentleman ſuppoſe, or a poor Houſe-keeper with an Honeſt Mind and Laborious Hand contending againſt a hard Fortune) there he would be very bountiful and kind, either by giving him a large Sum, or (which indeed is a neater, and full as beneficial a way) by lending him Money without Intereſt, or by ſelling him a great quantity of Goods at half the Value, or by over-rewarding his Labour, or by ſome other way which his well-diſpoſed Heart would eaſily help his Head to contrive. Oh what a World of Good might Rich Men do, if they had any Goodneſs in them!

But I muſt mind them of one thing more, which is, that they ought to diſtribute their Charities not only liberally but *ſeaſonably*. I mean not only in reſpect of thoſe whoſe Neceſſities they relieve, by doing it quickly, and without importunity, and when it may do them the greateſt Service, but alſo in reſpect of *themſelves*. That they do good and diſtribute their Benevolence in the time of their Youth and Health, and during the following courſe of their Lives, when they have power otherwiſe to imploy it, and not live miſerably and like *Hogs* all their Lives long, and then think to Compound for all by leaving a Rich *Legacy* behind them, or founding an *Hoſpital* when they come to die. Thank them for nothing. They keep their Hands upon their Purſes as long as they can, and when Death bids them deliver, and they can hold their dear Treaſure no longer, then with great Formality they make a *Will*, and pretend to *give*. They bequeath their Goods to the Poor, juſt as they do their Souls to God, becauſe they are going, and won't make any further Stay with them. But I fear ſuch a Death-Bed Charity is too near a-kin to a Death-bed Repentance, to be either

ther much valued, or much depended upon. No, if they will be Charitable indeed, let them be ſo while they Live, and afterwards Die as Charitably as they pleaſe.

And now methinks the bare Pleaſure and Satisfaction of doing Good, if the Men I'm ſpeaking of had but a true Taſte and Reliſh of it, ſhould be a ſufficient Motive to put them upon all this, though they had no regard to Duty and Conſcience, or the Retributions of another World. But when they ſhall be further told what a mighty ſtreſs the Scripture every where lays upon this Duty of *Alms-giving*, which is ſo eminent a part of Charity that it has in a manner ingroſs'd the Name of it, what a Multitude of Sins it will Cover, what a Figure it will make at the laſt Judgment (the great Inqueſt of which it ſeems is to be about it) and what large Rewards are promiſed to it in both Worlds, Methinks inſtead of waiting to be ask'd, or patiently Suffering a poor Petition, they themſelves ſhould turn Beggars, and Court the Poor, even in their own Language, for *God's Sake*, to receive their Alms, and to let them depoſite ſome of their periſhing Wealth in their Hands upon Earth, that they might receive for it in Exchange an incorruptible Treaſure in Heaven. Who can hear thoſe Strange Words, *Inaſmuch as ye have done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, ye have done it unto me:* And, *Prov.* 19. 17. *He that hath pity upon the Poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given he will pay him again.* I ſay who can hear ſuch things as theſe, and ſee his Brother in want, and ſhut up his Bowels of Compaſſion from him, when he has this World's Good, and is well able to relieve him? Eſpecially if he hear him plead in his dear Redeemer's Name that dy'd upon the Croſs for us, that Name of Love and Wonder,

Wonder, that Sweet and Adorable Name that carries ſo many Myſteries of Goodneſs and Mercy in its ſound, what Heart can then reſiſt, what Hand can then with-hold! For however in other Caſes it be too true what *Solomon* obſerves, that the Words of the Poor are not much regarded, yet certainly there is no Rhetorick ſo Powerful, ſo Commanding, as that of a Poor Man begging in the Name of *Jeſus Chriſt*.

But I am ſenſible all this is but mere *Cant* to our Rich Miſer, who has a Heart that will ſerve him to hear a Thouſand Lectures about Charity without the leaſt damage to his Pocket. For as for the Pleaſure of doing Good he underſtands it Not, he has no Notion of the Matter, nor will the Spectacles wherewith he tells his Money, help him to ſee Jeſus Chriſt in a Poor Man. And as for being rewarded in another World, and lending to God to be hereafter repaid with Intereſt, He is not for this *Spiritual* Sort of Uſury, but looks upon what is lent to God as little better than a *Deſperate Debt*. The plain Truth of it is he does not like his *Security*, but thinks a *Mortgage* is better.

And what ſhall we do now with ſuch *truly Miſerable* Wretches as theſe, who do not believe enough of another World to do any good in this, or what ſhall we further ſay to them? They have more need to be pray'd for in our Churches among the Sick, and diſtemper'd in Mind, than to be Preach'd to, and to be Commended to the Grace of God, than to the Diſcourſes of Men. There then I leave them, to the Divine Mercy, and to the World's Pity, for ſure they are in all Senſes the Moſt *Miſerable* Creatures in it. In the Mean while if there be any thing truely Great and Happy here below, 'tis he Firſt that bears his Poverty Contentedly, and he next that

that Relieves it Generouſly. I End all with thoſe preſſing Words of the Apoſtle, *Charge them that are rich in this World that they be not highminded, nor truſt in uncertain Riches, but in the Living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. That they do Good, that they be Rich in good Works, ready to diſtribute, willing to Communicate. Laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good Foundation againſt the time to Come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life*, 1 Tim. 6. 17. Which God of his Mercy grant us all for the Sake of Jeſus Chriſt, to whom with the Father and Holy Spirit be all Honour and Glory for ever. *Amen.*

A Diſcourſe Concerning the Right Uſe of the World.

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1 COR. vij. 31.

——*And they that Uſe this World; as not Abuſing it.*

NExt to the Everlaſting Puniſhments of the other World there is nothing ſo truly dreadful to a duly inlightned Spirit, as the paſſing Dangers of this, and that becauſe theſe Dangers lead to thoſe Puniſhments. When we hear of the Dangers of the World, we commonly think of thoſe things which threaten either our *Lives* or our *Fortunes*, that tend either to remove us out of the World, or to make us Poor and Miſerable in it.

it. Theſe appear to us as the only Dangers, and according as we are ſecure from theſe, ſo far we reckon our Selves and our Condition *Safe*. And this Sentiment of our Heart (as it uſually happens) is got into our Language. Thus we ſay of one that he is taken very dangerouſly Ill, and of another that his Houſe was ſeiz'd with a very dangerous Fire. Whereas in a true Eſtimation of things Health and Proſperity are the Greater Dangers, and however it might Sound to a Popular and Worldly Ear, an Angel would readily underſtand me, and ſo would a Wiſe Man too, if I ſhould ſay, ſuch a one is very *dangerouſly well*, and of another, that he is very *dangerouſly Rich* and *Great*. We may and Commonly do fright our Selves with Imaginary Terrors, but when all's done there is no Danger in the World like living in it, and having much of it, and did Men enter it at a Mature Age, and with as much Thought and Reflection as they leave it, they would be more afraid to be Born than they are to Die.

St. *Auſtin* frequently Compares the World to a *Sea*, and our Church alludes to the ſame Figure in the Office of Baptiſm, when She prays for the little Infant Voyager, *That he may ſo paſs the Waves of this Troubleſome World as finally to come to the Land of Everlaſting Life*. Here we have a Repreſentation of the two Worlds under the lively Images of *Sea* and *Land*. That Hereafter is *Land*, Safe, Stable and Immoveable, fit for a fix'd Dwelling and Abode, even that Eternal Reſt which remains for the People of God, *Heb.* 4. 9. But at Preſent all is *Sea*, and a troubled one too, a Sea in a Storm, rolling and working with a furious, unconſtant and dangerous Motion, or rather whoſe Calms are worſe than Storms. Some are but *Coaſters* in this great Sea, like the firſt Artleſs Sailers that Steer'd their wary Courſe within

in View of Land, and theſe are they of Private Life and little Fortune; while other more Venturous but often leſs happy Mariners, Men of High Rank and Publick Station, ſtrike out more Freely into the unfaithful Deep, committing their larger Veſſels to the Winds and Floods. Which of theſe is ſafer is not eaſier to ſay than that all is full of Danger, there being not any Part or Degree of Depth in this great Ocean which has not proved fatal to many a Shipwreck'd Paſſenger.

So very numerous and thick-laid are the Temptations of the World, that where-ever a Man ſets his Foot he can hardly help treading upon a Gin or Snare, and ſo corrupt the very common Air, that to breathe is almoſt to draw in Infection. St. *John* tells us there is nothing in the World but the Luſt of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eye, and the Pride of Life, and all theſe are dangerous Temptations, which may make us the leſs wonder at what he ſays of it elſewhere, that it *lies all in wickedneſs*. For how ſhould it be otherwiſe in a World ſo full of, ſo altogether made up, and as it were *conſiſting* of Dangers, and where to ſet aſide all others, that of *Common Converſation* alone is enough to corrupt the beſt Complexion'd Soul among the Heirs of *Adam*. The ordinary Diſcourſes of Men (even thoſe which go for Innocent) are nothing elſe but effuſions of that Vanity, Pride and Concupiſcence that lie deep in their Hearts; from the abundance of which their Mouths ſpeak, and by this their evil Communication they corrupt good Manners. What Company ſhall a Man go into from which he will not come away worſe than he came? Men transfuſe their Paſſions into their Diſcourſes, and by them into their Hearers. They communicate their Vices at the ſame time, and in the ſame Vehicles, that they convey their Thoughts;

and

and infect one another, as other Diſeaſed Perſons do by their *Breath.*

Upon Conſideration of theſe things ſome have thought it neceſſary to *Retire*, and not content with Renouncing the Pomps and Vanities of the World in their Vow of Baptiſm, have added to it another, that of Renouncing the World it ſelf. They thought they could not live innocently in the World, and therefore were reſolved to leave it; as thoſe who cannot enjoy their Health in the City withdraw into the Country. And indeed if we cannot avoid an Evil by ſeparating the Effect from the Cauſe, we muſt then avoid the Cauſe it ſelf: For there are but thoſe two ways of declining any Evil. The latter way is that which is taken by the Votaries of Solitude, they avoid the *Cauſe.* But the Apoſtle here ſuppoſes the other expedient, which is by *ſeparating* the *Effect* from the Cauſe. For as bad as the World is there is no neceſſity either of not uſing it or of abuſing it; ſince the Abuſe may be ſeparated from the Uſe, and we may uſe the World without abuſing it, as the Apoſtle intimates in the Words of the Text, ——— *And they that uſe this World as not abuſing it.*

The Apoſtle had been before Diſcourſing of certain particular States and Duties of Life, and comes now to ſomething of more general Concernment, which is to read all Chriſtians a Lecture of Caution and Indifferency in the Application of themſelves to the things of this World. And perhaps it is the ſtricteſt, and runs the higheſt of any in the New Teſtament. *Brethren*, ſays he, *the time is ſhort*, both that of the World it ſelf, and that of our Abode in it, *it remaineth that both they that have Wives, be as tho' they had none; and they that weep, as tho' they wept not; and they that rejoyce, as tho' they rejoyced not;*

not; and they that buy, as tho' they poſſeſſed not. As much as to ſay, there is nothing conſiderable enough in ſo tranſient a State, where the Scenes open and ſhut ſo faſt, to be very much lov'd or very much fear'd. Nothing worth being troubled much at, or rejoycing much for, or delighting much in. And therefore 'tis but juſt and decorous you ſhould be very ſparing and indifferent in the indulgency of your Paſſions, in your Love, and in your Grief, and in your Joy; and withal ſo moderate in your adheſions to what you poſſeſs as if you had nothing to call your own. After an enumeration of which Particulars, he collects and winds up all into this general Concluſion, ——*And they that uſe this World as not abuſing it.*

They that uſe this World. 'Tis obſervable here that St. *Paul* does not oblige Men either to uſe the World, or not to uſe it. This is matter of mere Diſcretion, and accordingly wholly left to their Liberty. Only 'tis Reaſonable here that Men ſhould be ſo juſt and true to themſelves and their beſt Intereſts, as to act by the ſame Meaſures for their Souls as they do for their Bodies; and that therefore they would avoid a World that endangers their Innocency, as much as they would a Place that incommodes their Health. But every Man muſt be judge for himſelf when that is, and therefore muſt be left at Liberty whether he will live and converſe in the World or not, according as in his own Diſcretion, upon a ſerious deliberation of the matter, he ſhall judge moſt expedient. Men are not ty'd to live in the World, or to Cloyſter themſelves from it, the only point of Duty and Obligation upon them is, that they take care that this their Liberty prove not a Snare to them; and that while they uſe the World, they do not abuſe it. This therefore being the Duty of the

the Text, for the better conſideration and inforcement of it, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew,

1. *What it is to abuſe the World.*
2. *Upon what account it concerns us to beware of this Abuſe.*

Now as to the Firſt, By the abuſe of a Thing, when we ſpeak ſtrictly, we mean the unlawful uſe of a Thing, which therefore always includes the ſimple uſe of it. And accordingly, we cannot be ſaid to *abuſe* what we do not ſo much as *uſe*. But in a more large and popular acceptation of the Word, we are then ſaid to abuſe a thing when we behave our ſelves any ways diſorderly about it, whether it be by enjoying it as an End, when it ought only to be uſed as a Means, or by uſing it as a Means when it ought to be enjoyed as an End; or laſtly, by uſing it as a Means to an End that is not due.

The World is not capable of being abuſed in the ſecond way. God only can be thus abuſed; and we do actually put this Abuſe upon him whenever, inſtead of referring all things to him, we very prepoſterouſly refer him to other things; as they do, who make uſe of Religion as an Inſtrument to ſerve the Ends of Secular Policy. As when a Man enters into Holy Orders only for the ſake of Preferment, or goes to Church out of a pretence of Devotion, when his real Buſineſs is to ſtare upon a handſome Face, or make an Aſſignation. Thus we abuſe *God*, by uſing him when we ſhould enjoy him. The two other ways are the ways of abuſing *Creatures*, when we either *enjoy* them, or *miſuſe* them; when we place our End in them, or pervert them to ſuch Ends to which they have no Natural Ordination. I conceive then there may be theſe two general Ways of abuſing the World.

1. *By making it an End.*
2. *By uſing it as a means to a wrong End.*

Firſt, *By making it an End.* St. *Auſtin* has long ſince reſolved all Immorality into theſe two Fundamental Diſorders. The enjoying what we ſhould uſe, and the uſing what we ſhould enjoy. *Tom.* 4. *p.* 207. *Omnis Humana perverſio eſt*, ſays he, *fruendis uti velle, atq; utendis frui*; to which he ſhould have added to make his Diviſion complete, the uſing what ought to be uſed to an ill End, and then he would have given us a full diſtribution of Immorality, to which all the Inſtances of it might be reduced. But we are at preſent concern'd only with the firſt of theſe, the *enjoying* what we ſhould *uſe*; between which two St. *Auſtin* *Ibid.* makes this difference, That we are ſaid to enjoy that thing from which we take Pleaſure, and to uſe that which we refer to that from whence we take Pleaſure. And elſewhere, *Tom.* 3. *p.* 4. *To enjoy*, ſays he, *is to cleave with Love to a Thing for it ſelf, but to uſe is to refer the Thing uſed to the obtaining what we Love.* Whereby it appears, that by enjoying, St. *Auſtin* means the ſame as to make an *End* of a thing, and by uſing to make a *Means* of it. And if what we enjoy be really an End, and what we uſe be really a Means, then we are right and orderly in our procedure; but if we enjoy as an End what ought only to be uſed as a means, or uſed as a Means what ought to be enjoy'd as an End, then we pervert and tranſpoſe the Nature and Order of things, and are guilty of Diſorder and Abuſe.

And thus it is when we make an End of the World; for then we make an End of that which is no more than a Means, and *enjoy* that which ought only to be *uſed*. For the World is not *our* End, whatever it may be to Creatures below us. We were not made for its

its Enjoyments, nor can we be ever truly, or ſo much as in our own Opinion, Happy in them. I ſay, in our own Opinion. For indeed, Men are ready enough to think one another Happy, and to envy one another upon that occaſion; but no Man ever thought *himſelf* ſo. 'Tis true indeed they think they *ſhall* be ſo, and after the Diſappointments and Abuſes of one Pleaſure live on in expectation of being more kindly ſerv'd by another, ſo ſupporting themſelves by their Variety among their thin Entertainments, as the ſinking Bird holds up her weight by renewing her Strokes in the yielding Air. But 'tis moſt certain that all this is but mere Amuſement. They keep their Spirits from ſinking by it, as the Bird does her Body, and that's all. For when the Future Delight comes to be Preſent, and the promiſing Reverſion falls into hand, it will be found as empty and vain as any of thoſe tryed Nothings that went before. We may amuſe our ſelves a while with Dreams and Fancies, but there is a Thirſt in the Soul of Man which all the little Ciſterns of the Creation can never quench, an Emptineſs which they can never fill. God only can do that, and therefore he only is our End. He has made us for himſelf, and accordingly has given us Deſires which none but himſelf can ever ſatisfie. And therefore if we make the World our End, 'tis plain that we ſet the Creature in the place of God, are guilty of the higheſt Idolatry, tranſgreſs the Laws of Truth, Order and Reaſon, miſtake our Centre, deceive our ſelves, and *abuſe* the *World*.

And this thoſe do, not only who are guilty of a full and downright acquieſcence in the World, repoſing themſelves upon it as upon a Centre, ſeeking Reſt and Satisfaction in it, that have no Proſpect beyond it, but bound their Deſires, their Hopes and Fears, and their whole Expectation within its narrow Limits, but alſo who love and adhere to it for it ſelf, and embrace

it as a true real Good. For this is to make it an *End*, though not perhaps our *Laſt* and *Greateſt* End. For nothing is lovely for it ſelf, and upon its own inward Goodneſs, but what is an End; and therefore though we do not terminate in the World and ſet up our final reſt in it, yet if we Love it and Cleave to it as a *true Good*, and for it ſelf, we may be properly ſaid to make an end of it, or in the Language of Saint *Auſtin* to *Enjoy* it, who by Enjoying, as was obſerv'd before, means the very ſame thing, and who accordingly will not allow the World to be *Enjoy'd* or Lov'd as a true Good, but only to be *Uſed*, or referr'd to that which is ſo. *Utendum eſt hoc Mundo*, ſays he, *non fruendum. This World is to be Uſed, not Enjoy'd.* Which how well it agrees with that Philoſophy which ſays that the Creatures are ſo far from being able to content us, or make us Happy, that they cannot ſo much as give us any one Pleaſure by way of real Cauſes, but are, as to that, as ſo many dead empty Cyphers, and at the moſt ſerve but as Occaſions of thoſe grateful Sentiments which God, the true Source of all Happineſs produces in us, and that therefore we are not to love or ſeek Union with them as our true Goods, or real Cauſes of our Happineſs, but only to *Uſe* them and ſerve our *ſelves* of them as the Conditions and Occaſions of it, I ſhall leave to be Conſider'd by thoſe who have leiſure to enter into ſo nice a Meditation, while in the Mean time I go on to give an Account of the other *Abuſe* of the World, which is,

Tom. 3. p. 5.

Secondly, *By uſing it as a Means to a Wrong End.* We are ſuppoſed here not to make the World an End in any Senſe, and indeed 'tis a very Conſiderable degree of Self-regulation for a Man to proceed thus far, not to *Enjoy*, but only to *Uſe* the World. But let not him that is arriv'd to this pitch think himſelf ſecure from all further danger, ſince it is not ſufficient not to make

make an end of the World it ſelf, unleſs we alſo uſe it to a *Right* End. We are to make a *Right* Uſe of it, as well as to ſtay and detain our ſelves in the bare *Uſe* of it; otherwiſe we ſhall not anſwer the Caution of the Text, ſo to *Uſe* the World as not to *Abuſe* it.

Now the End for which the World ought to be *Uſed* can be no other than that for which it was *Made*; And if we would know what that was, we need only Conſider who it was that made it, ſince it is impoſſible that God, whoſe Perfections are Infinite, ſhould act for any other End than Himſelf, who is therefore the *Final* as well as the *Efficient* Cauſe of all his Works: And ſo the Scripture repreſents it, *Prov.* 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf*, ſays the Wiſe Man. To which agrees that of St. *Paul*, *Rom.* 11. 36. *Of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be Glory for ever, Amen.* And again yet more Expreſly, *Col.* 1. 16. *All things were Created* by him, and *for him.* Since then all things are made for God, who is the End as well as Founder of the Creation, 'tis plain that all things ought to be referr'd to him, and Conſequently that if we would make a right Uſe of the World, we muſt Uſe it for God and for his Glory. According as we are alſo Exhorted by the ſame Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. *Whether we eat or drink, or whatſoever we do, to do all to the Glory of God.* Wherein is alſo Comprehended the Good and Welfare of Human Society, it being for the Glory of God that his Creatures, whom he made for the Greateſt and Supremeſt Happineſs, even the Enjoyment of Himſelf, ſhould be as Proſperous and Happy as may be, both in this Life and in the Next. So then we are to Uſe the World for the Honour and Glory of God, and for the true Intereſt and Welfare of Society, and accordingly not to Uſe it for theſe, or for Contrary Ends, is to Abuſe it, as thoſe do.

Firſt, Who inſtead of imploying that Power, Intereſt, Authority, Station, Wealth or Grandeur which they have in the World for the Service of the Chriſtian Church, and for the Incouragement of true Religion and Vertue, for the Advancement of God's Kingdom in the Hearts and Lives of Men, and the Righteouſneſs thereof, Uſe all theſe for Contrary Purpoſes, to incourage Vice, or Vicious Principles, to pervert Men *from* a right Religion, or to Debauch them *in* it, and thereby do promote the Intereſt of the Devils Kingdom, and Side with the Powers of Darkneſs againſt God. This is to arm the Creatures againſt the Creator to fight againſt God with his own Forces, to Uſe the World directly to the diſhonour of him that made it, and is therefore in a very groſs and heinous Manner to Abuſe it. For Temporals are in order to Spirituals, and this preſent World ought to ſerve the Intereſts of the next, and as all Worldly Power and Grandeur is from God, ſo it ought to be uſed and laid out for God, and for the advancement of his Honour and Glory! And therefore all they who have any Conſiderable Share or Intereſt in the World, whether by way of Power, Honour, or Wealth, or whatever elſe may give them any Command or Influence over the Minds or Bodies of Men, ought to employ all theſe things for the advantage of God's Glory, for the Intereſts of his Kingdom, for the Promotion of his True Religion, and for the Edification of his Church, and if they do not they are Traitors to God, and Abuſe both his *Kindneſs* and his *Gifts*. Which is done alſo,

Secondly, By thoſe who Uſe the Good Things of the World, the Productions of Nature, the Fruits of the Earth, or any of God's Creatures in ſuch a manner or degree as tends to their Prejudice. For the Creatures were intended for our Good, and therefore

ſore to uſe them for our hurt is to uſe them againſt their Natural Intention, which is to *Abuſe* them. Now we may uſe them to our hurt two ways, either to the Hurt of our Souls, or to the Hurt of our Bodies. To the hurt of our Souls, when either we immediately diſcompoſe our Rational Powers themſelves (as when by intemperate Eating or Drinking we diſorder our Minds, and diſturb our Underſtandings) or when we rob them of their proper and perfective Object, as when we gratify our ſelves in a leſſer Pleaſure, at the expence of a greater, and by an over-indulgence in the lower Goods of the Animal Life, unfit our ſelves for higher and more Rational Enjoyments. To the hurt of our Bodies, when we uſe any of God's Creatures in ſuch a degree as to untune the Natural Harmony of their Conſtitution, and ſo prejudice our Health. Which will always be accompanied with a diſorder of the Soul too, whoſe Operations depend too much upon the State of the Body not to ſuffer with it. This is groſly to abuſe the World, and our ſelves too, becauſe 'tis to pervert the good Creatures of God to an undue, nay to a contrary End, and in this conſiſts the Formality of that Vice which we call *Intemperance.*

To give an Inſtance of this: *Wine* is a noble Production of Nature, and an excellent Gift of God, intended (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks) to make glad the Heart of Man, to chear his ſinking Spirits when oppreſſed with either Sickneſs, Melancholly, or Worldly Trouble, and to excite him when thus revived to praiſe the Bountiful Author of ſo rich a Bleſſing. And ſo far 'tis well, and as it ſhould be. But when Men ſhall drink and ſwill till their Stomachs are heavy, and their Heads light, till they forget *themſelves* as well as their *Troubles*, and exchange their *Melancholly* for *Madneſs*; when they ſhall make themſelves ſick with that which ſhould comfort them, drown themſelves

in that which ſhould refreſh them, kill themſelves with that which ſhould revive them, and fall down under the Table with that which ſhould raiſe them up: This is a moſt ſhameful, and a moſt ungrateful return to God for his Bleſſings, and ſuch an intollerable Abuſe of his Creatures, as deſerves to be deprived even of the *uſe* of them.

Nor is the Practice of thoſe to be excuſed, who, though they do not go to this Exceſs, do yet make a common Trade of drinking Wine, and that very liberally too, when they have no need of it. To ſee a Healthy, Sanguine, Vigorous Man who fares plentifully every Day, and with a keen Stomach ſits at a full Table, whoſe Nature is already but too Luxuriant, and needs rather to be corrected and ſubdued than to be further cheriſhed and heightned, to be *diſciplined* rather than *feaſted*; I ſay, to ſee ſuch a one after his Days Indulgence go ordinarily to the Tavern at Night, and there ſpend as much upon his already over-pamper'd Carcaſe as would ſerve to maintain a poor Family for a Week, is certainly a thing very odious and abominable, far remote from the Sobriety of a Man, or the Moderation of a Chriſtian, and that tho' he be able to ſee his way Home, and can carry both himſelf and his *Burthen* ſafe to his Bed. For what tho' there be no down-right Drunkenneſs in the Caſe? Is there not however a great deal of Luxury and Self-Indulgence, and a ſhameful waſte and deſtruction of God's Creatures? And is it fit that one Man ſhould indulge himſelf ſo far in Extraordinaries, when thouſands are ready to faint and languiſh for want of Neceſſaries? *Give ſtrong drink* (ſays *Solomon*, *Prov.* 31. 6.) *unto him that is ready to periſh, and Wine to thoſe that be of heavy Hearts.* There indeed it would be well beſtow'd, and a ſeaſonable Relief, as it might be alſo ſometimes to a Man that has either ſtudied or labour'd hard all the Day. But for one that is Idle and Full, and whoſe Natural Fire is almoſt

almoſt overlaid with Fuel, and needs rather *Air* and *Emptineſs* than more Recruit, for ſuch a one I ſay to be always quickning his Pulſe and driving round his Blood with Hot, Spiritous Liquors, can I think by no means be reconciled to Chriſtian Temperance; and for ought I know, a Man were better of the two be ſometimes actually Drunk, and do the Natural Penance for it, than carry on ſuch a Conſtant Trade of High Drinking, than be ſuch a Grave, Sober and Deliberate Sot.

Again Thirdly, thoſe may be juſtly reckon'd to Abuſe the World who employ it only to their own Uſe, and do no good with it. This is what thoſe who have moſt of the World are Commonly moſt guilty of, and have moſt to anſwer for. Inſtead of inlarging their Hearts and their Hands with their Fortunes, the more they have of the World, the more the World has of them, and the more Covetous and greedy they are. Upon which is founded that Admonition of the Pſalmiſt, which at firſt View looks ſo like a Paradox, *when Riches increaſe, ſet not your Hearts upon them, Pſal.* 62. implying that then is the great danger of it, and the time when Men uſually do it, the true *Critical Seaſon* of Covetouſneſs. And to this agrees Experience. Thoſe who when they had little of the World were Free and Generous, Kind-hearted and Open-handed, how Cloſe and Stingy do they grow as the World thrives upon them, and they gather and ſwell in Subſtance! Eſpecially if they grow *Old* at the ſame time. Then the World has a double hold of them, and they are by a Second Ingagement devoted to it. Then 'tis that they begin truly to underſtand the worth of Money, and the Art of keeping it. Then 'tis they retrench their Expences, and withdraw their wonted Benevolences, live more within themſelves and are leſs Communicative to others, and like the *Setting* Sun, as it grows *Larger* and Nearer its

End

End, give leſs and leſs Light and Warmth to the World.

And they have (as it were by Conſent) got a Notion among them which very much Humours this Selfiſh and Illiberal Practice. They reckon what they Legally Poſſeſs ſo much their own, and that they are ſuch Abſolute Maſters of it that they may diſpoſe of it as they pleaſe. And if they ſhall think fit to do it wholly upon their own dear Selves, and let no body elſe be the better for it, what's that to any one, they make uſe of nothing but what is their *Own*, and is it not lawful to do what they pleaſe with *that*? But theſe Men for all their haſte are Miſtaken in their Accounts. For there is Nothing in this World ſo much our own as that we ſhould have an Abſolute and Unlimitted Dominion over it. He that made the World has alone ſuch a degree of Propriety in it. As for them, however they may be reckon'd *Proprietors* in reſpect of other Men, who cannot without Injuſtice invade their Rights, yet they are but *Stewards* and *Diſpenſators* in reſpect of God, who has only committed to them the good things of the World as a Truſt, and will hereafter require of them an Account how they have managed it. So that a great Eſtate is only a great Truſt, a Charge, a Talent, to be laid out for our Maſter's Uſe, that is, for the Intereſt and Advantage of our Brethren. And therefore they that do not make that uſe of it, but beſtow it wholly upon themſelves in a way of private Indulgence, are Falſe to their Truſt (how *true* ſoever they may be in their *Dealings*) and unfaithful to their Maſter, and Abuſe as much of the World as they thus mis-imploy. And what though Human Courts of Juſtice take no Cogniſance of it, ſince the laſt General Tribunal moſt certainly will, where the great Queſtion will be concerning the good they have done with the good things they have been intruſted with, and where

tho'

tho' they have Committed no Injuſtices, nor robb'd upon the Highway, yet this alone will be enough to Caſt and Condemn them, *I was an hungry, and ye gave me no Meat, I was thirſty, and ye gave me no drink*, &c. *Mat.* 25. 42.

But if to employ the World to our own private Uſe only, be to abuſe it, what ſhall we ſay of thoſe Miſerable Wretches who neither ſpend it upon themſelves nor upon others, but hoard it up in Bags and Cheſts, till their Riches are Corrupted and their Garments Moth-eaten, and their Gold and Silver Canker'd and devour'd with the Ruſt. Why certainly theſe Men would ingroſs the Beams of the Sun, Seal up the Fountain of Light, and incloſe the Common Air if they could. For they do ſo by as much of the World as they can. But ſure there cannot be a groſſer Abuſe of the World than this, thus to fruſtrate the Bounty of Nature to ſtop the Circulation of her Bleſſings, and render her richeſt Fruits Idle and Inſignificant. And if thoſe that ſpend their Wealth in Riot and Luxury may be ſaid with the *unjuſt Steward* to waſte their Maſter's Goods, then thoſe that thus ſafely hoard it up may be properly, even literally ſaid with the *unprofitable Servant*, to bury their Talent in the Earth, and to hide their Lord's Money. And may juſtly with him expect to be *Caſt into outer Darkneſs*, *Mat.* 25. 30.

Theſe are they that abuſe the World, and ſubject it to Vanity; that enjoy it as if it were their God, and that uſe and diſpoſe of it as if they themſelves were the Gods and Lords of it. And 'tis under theſe, and ſuch like, that the Creation groans and travels in pain, and from the Bondage of whoſe Corruption it longs to be delivered, and from ſerving as an Inſtrument of their Diſorders to be tranſlated into the glorious liberty of the Children of God, even that ſtate of Happineſs and Perfection, that re-eſtabliſhment of Order,

Order, that great Renovation of Nature, that *Regeneration* of the Univerſe under the New Heavens and the New Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteouſneſs, when the Creature ſhall be no more abuſed, nor the Creator any more diſhonour'd, *Matth.* 19. 28. And thus you ſee what it is to abuſe the World, and who they are that do it. And from hence we may gather what it is to make a right uſe of the World, and who they are who ſo uſe the World as not to abuſe it. They are they who do not reſt, terminate and centre in the World, or make it their *End*, the boundary of their Deſires, and the ſtay of their Minds; no, nor yet love or adhere to it as the true and real Good of their Souls, but uſe it only as a *Means* in order to that which is ſo, not affecting or deſiring it for it ſelf, as a *Beatific* Object, or a thing that has any real power over them, or that can beſtow any degree of Happineſs upon them, but only uſing and ſerving themſelves of it for their conveniency and accommodation; in one word, that don't *enjoy* but only *uſe* the World. And that uſe it alſo to right and good Ends, ſuch as the Glory of God, the Intereſt of Religion, their own good (that of their Bodies, and that of their Souls) and the good of their Brethren. That paſſing through the World like *haſty Travellers* are moderate and temperate in the uſe of the Creatures, neither diſturbing their Bodies by them, nor injuring their Minds, either by diſordering their Intellectual Faculties, or by unfitting them for higher, while they gratifie them with lower Enjoyments. That neither hoard up the good things of the World, nor yet imploy them wholly to their own private uſe, but communicate and do good with them, according to the meaſure that they have of them, and ſo purchaſe *Heaven* by parting with a little *Earth*. This is to make a right uſe of the World, to uſe it according to its worth, and according to its true Natural Intention;

tention; and the contrary to this is to abuſe it. I come now briefly to ſhew,

2. *Upon what account it concerns us to beware of this Abuſe.* And among many others there are two very ſenſible and perſwaſive Reaſons for this; the firſt of which may be taken from the *Shortneſs* and Tranſitorineſs, the ſecond from the *Inconſtancy* and Inſtability of all Worldly Things. And they are both of them intimated by the Apoſtle in the place now under our Conſideration. The Firſt, when he ſays, *The time is ſhort:* The Second, when he ſays, *The Faſhion of this World paſſes away.*

And 1. *The Time is ſhort.* Both that of the World, and that of thoſe that dwell in it. The World as fixed and as *well-built* as it ſeems for *Age*, and which the Heathen Philoſophy thought *Eternal*, muſt and ſhall come to an End, and that End, in all likelyhood, is not very far off. The Time it ſeems was ſhort in the Apoſtle's Days, which accordingly in Scripture are often call'd the *laſt*; but it is much ſhorter now ſince ſo many Revolutions of the Sun are gone over our Heads, who by this certainly cannot want much of having finiſh'd his Rounds. And yet if the World were to laſt ſo much longer, what would it all be to Eternity? But if Time it ſelf be ſo ſhort, what then is the Time of Man? If the whole Circumference be ſo narrow, what then is that little *Arch* of the *Circle* which makes up the meaſure of our Vanity? What is it, I will not ſay to Eternity, but even to the World's Duration? And if Time it ſelf be but as a ſwift *River* that quickly paſſes, ſure we Mortals are but as the *Bubbles* in it, that haſtily riſe up and ſink down one after another in our turns.

'Tis indeed but a little while ſince we came into the World, and in all likelihood much leſs that moſt of us have to continue in it; and when a few more Suns have riſen and gone down upon us we muſt all

Die,

Die, and no longer enjoy the Light of the Heavens, nor the Fruits of the Earth, but take up our cold Lodging in one of its dark little Cells, and leave the reſt of it, for as little a while, to other Tenants. In the mean time we muſt go and give an Account of our Stewardſhip, and be favourably or ſeverely dealt with in the other World according as we have uſed this. But now if our ſtay in this World be ſo ſhort, and our reckoning ſo near, does not this preach to us a Lecture of Moderation in the uſe of the Creatures, and very loudly Caution us againſt the Abuſe of them? For is it Wiſdom to cleave to thoſe things ſo immoderately which we muſt part with ſo quickly, to ſet our Hearts upon a World where we are only to take a turn or two, to lay out ſo many Hours upon our Pleaſures and Diverſions when we have but ſo few for our work, to ſpend our Morning in Luxury when our whole Day is ſo ſhort, to Miſuſe any part of our Time when we have but ſo little in all, or to abuſe the Creatures in any way of Intemperance, when we muſt ſo ſhortly anſwer for the Abuſe of them? And after all is it worth while to run the Hazard of being Miſerable Everlaſtingly for ſuch ſhort Tranſient Indulgences, which Moulder away under our Hands, and even Periſh in the very *Uſing*? Were we here at our home, or in a place of long Abode and Settlement, there might be ſome invitation to Luxury and Indulgence, to plant Vineyards and be drunk with the Wine of them, but will we be intemperate upon the way, while we are in our Journey, and when we *ride Poſt*? Or rather ſhould we not take this for our Motto, *Let your Moderation be known unto all Men; the Lord is at hand?* Yes certainly, the Nearneſs of the Other World ought to awe us into Sobriety, and keep us within the Bounds of it, for that little while we live in this. But this is not all, for,

Secondly,

Secondly, *The Faſhion of this World paſſes away.* 'Tis not only to laſt for a ſhort time, but even while it does laſt 'tis liable to many uncertainties, and ſuffers many Changes. The Scenes of this great Theatre are always ſhifting and turning, and the Stage is Never long without a New Figure. There are great Diverſities of them, and the time for Action ſhort, and therefore the Succeſſion muſt be quick, that ſo they may all take their turns. The preſent Scene therefore never holds very long, but paſſes away, and another Figure appears, ſo that there is nothing fix'd and ſteddy. New Revolutions in Empires and Kingdoms, new Alterations in Families, new Accidents to particular Perſons, no State or Condition of Life ſecure from Changes and Chances. He that appears in the Form and Habit of a King to Day, may put on that of a Beggar to Morrow. For 'tis all but *Acting of a Part*, and the whole World is but one great Moveable Scene. Beſides that we may now juſtly expect towards the latter End of this Great *Opera*, that the Scenes will thicken every Day more and more, and that the Faſhion of this World will paſs yet more ſwiftly away.

But now is this a World to be Fond of, or to Riot and Revel in? Is it not a Venture to Enjoy where there is ſo much Hazard of Loſing, or to lean with great Force where the ground is ſo ſlippery, ſince the Fall muſt be in proportion to the Weight? Ought we not rather to tread lightly, and walk in Suſpence, and be ſure to keep our *Heads* in good Order, if 'twere only that they might look to our *Feet?* For we walk upon Ice, and our Veſſel Floats upon a Wave. Dare we then make an ill Uſe of the Good Things of the World, when 'tis ſo uncertain how long we ſhall have even the very uſe of them? Dare we abuſe our Power to Inſolence, or our Greatneſs to Oppreſſion, or our Wealth to Luxury, or our Health to Intemperance,

rance, or our Wit and Parts to Profaneneſs, of our Time to unfruitful and unprofitable Studies (for that's one great Abuſe of our Time as well as Idleneſs) when 'tis ſo very uncertain when we ſhall be deprived of any, or all of theſe things? For they are all but *Scenes*, and thoſe continually *paſſing*. It concerns us therefore to live rather in a conſtant Awe among ſo many Changes and Chances, and to uſe great Reſerve and Moderation in our Commerce with the Creatures, ſtill fearing the next *Scene*, leſt it ſhould be that of a Puniſhment for our Abuſe of the Former.

Let therefore the Conſideration of the Shortneſs and Inſtability of this preſent World ſo Govern us in the Uſe of all its little Vaniſhing Goods, that we may neither abuſe them, nor our ſelves by them, but be ſo Moderate even in the moſt allow'd Enjoyments of the Creatures that they may neither prove a Snare to us here, nor riſe up in Judgment againſt us Hereafter. And I pray God (as our Church does) that we may all *ſo paſs through things Temporal, that we finally loſe not the things Eternal.* Amen.

Now to God the Father, &c.

A Diſ-

A Diſcourſe Concerning the Succeſſive Vanity of Human Life.

ECCL. xj. 8.

——*All that Cometh is Vanity.*

THis is one of thoſe *Melancholly*, but *Wholſome* Conſiderations wherewith the Wiſe Preacher qualifies and allays the Joy and Feſtivity of a Long and Proſperous Life; the Pride and Luxurancy of which he Tempers with a double Reflection; One taken from the Conſideration of *Death*, and the other from the Succeſſive *Vanity* of Human *Life*. *But if a Man live many years* (ſays he) *and rejoice in them all, yet let him remember the Days of Darkneſs, for they ſhall be many.* As much as to ſay, 'tis not very likely that a Man ſhould live many Years, conſidering the Niceneſs and Delicacy of his Bodily Frame, the Variety of Diſeaſes and other Accidents he is Subject to, and the very ſmall Number of thoſe that attain to any conſiderable Age in Compariſon of thoſe Multitudes who drop away before they come to any Ripeneſs, like untimely Fruit, whom either ſome inward Decay, or the Force of Violent Winds looſens or Snatches from the Tree. But ſuppoſe a Man by the ſtrength of his Seminal Principles and a right Conjunction of other Accidents ſhould live many Years, yet 'tis not at all likely he ſhould *Rejoyce* in them all. 'Tis not indeed likely that a very Long Life ſhould be alſo a very Happy one, at leaſt that it ſhould be Happy

throughout, in every Stage and Period of it. We uſually ſay indeed a Short Life and a Merry, and Fair Weather may laſt for a little Seaſon, but 'tis not probable that ſo long a Day ſhould be without a Cloud to over-caſt its Light, or a Storm to ruffle its Stillneſs, but ſhould Shine on Clear and Calm to the very laſt. For beſides that Human Life is liable to variety of Caſualties, and there are innumerable ways whereby a Man may be Croſs'd even when he ſeems moſt ſecure of what he fancies would make him Happy, the Scenes of the World Change ſo faſt, and the Foul Days in his Calendar have ſuch quick returns, that in all probability a Man cannot live very long without meeting with ſome of them. 'Tis much if in a great while he does not Feel or See ſome ſad Event or other, 'tis much if he does not Suffer either in his own Perſon, or elſe in his Friends and Relations, unleſs he live ſo tediouſly long as to have none, but to be Friendleſs and Deſolate in a wide and ill-natured World, and by that time I think his *Days* of *Rejoycing* will be pretty well over, and that he may be weary of the World, if the World be not of him.

By this it ſeems highly improbable that a Man ſhould live many Years and Rejoyce in them all. But ſuppoſe he ſhould, ſuppoſe the Current of his long Life ſhould run Clear and Fine to the laſt, and that by a rare and indulgent Providence he ſhould paſs over his ſlow Stage ſmoothly and pleaſantly, without meeting with the leaſt rub in his way, any thing that may interrupt the Courſe of his Proſperity, or diminiſh his Senſe of it. Suppoſe in a Word that God ſhould empty his *Left* hand upon him, bleſs him with all Worldly Happineſs, and with Days too wherein to enjoy the ſweet of it, yet let him remember the *Days* of *Darkneſs*. Let him remember that all this Happineſs, as Great and as long-lived as it is, muſt come to an End, that this Fair Sun muſt Set, and this long Day be follow'd with

with a much longer Night, that Death ſhall put an End to all, and that then his Confinement to Darkneſs ſhall out-laſt his Enjoyment of the Light, and he ſhall lye longer under the Ground, than he has lived and walkt upon it. Let him remember the Days of Darkneſs, for they ſhall be many.

But then for fear he ſhould *Forget* them, becauſe he looks upon them as a great way off, the Wiſe Man preſents him in the mean while with ſomething of a nearer Conſideration, and more preſent Concernment, and that is, that conſtant *Succeſſion* of *Vanity* which is in Human Life, that all that is to come of it ſhall be no more to his Satisfaction than what he has ſeen and enjoy'd of it already, and that his Future Expectations ſhall prove every whit as vain and uncontenting as his paſt Fruitions, and that therefore as a long Life is not Ordinarily to be hoped for, ſo even by thoſe that have it 'tis not much to be valued or reckon'd upon, but that ſomething more Laſting and Satisfying is to be ſought after: For, *All that Cometh is Vanity.*

There are ſome Truths which Men want to have *prov'd* and Explain'd to them in a *Rational* way, becauſe they are wholly Ignorant of them, or at leaſt do not clearly and fully underſtand them. And there are others again which they do underſtand well enough whenever they are pleas'd to Conſider and Reflect upon them, but the Fault and the Unhappineſs is, that they ſeldom or never do ſo, and accordingly live and order themſelves as if they were ignorant of them. Now theſe Truths need not ſo much to be *Demonſtrated* as *Illuſtrated*, and ſet in a Fair and Advantageous Light, where they may meet and ſtrike the Drowſie and Unattentive Eye, which needs no other aſſiſtance towards the Sight of ſuch Objects, than only to be directed to them. Of this latter Order of Truths I take that of the Text under Conſideration to be, and accordingly I intend,

Firſt, To give it ſome Illuſtration; and then,
Secondly, To make ſome Practical Improvement of it to the moſt Material Uſes of Life.

All that Cometh is Vanity, ſays the inſpired Preacher, wherein he directly meets with that groſs Cheat and Illuſion which Men ſuffer to paſs upon themſelves, and which a great many never diſcover all their Lives long. They will readily own that all that is *paſt* is Vanity, if 'twere only becauſe it is *paſt*. They have found it ſo, and are convinc'd of it by a Thouſand Experiments, even by as many as they have made. They have found that the World, like the Prince of it, the Devil, has been a Lyar from the beginning, has always deceiv'd them, and that they never enjoy'd, but were diſappointed. And accordingly, there is not a Man of them that would live over his paſt Years again. And as free will they be to allow you that the *preſent* is alſo Vanity. They actually feel it ſo, are uneaſie under it, and for that reaſon wiſh the *preſent* were *paſt*. And becauſe it does not paſs faſt enough, they contrive Arts and Devices to *paſs* it away. They not only find that whoſoever drinks of theſe Waters ſhall thirſt again, (as our Saviour's Expreſſion is) but they feel themſelves dry, even while they are drinking; nay, that their very drinking increaſes their Thirſt. They feel an emptineſs and an hollowneſs after they have feaſted upon the World, and find they have ſuck'd nothing but Wind from the *Breaſts of her Conſolation*. They abound, they overflow, nay, they ſurfeit with exceſs, and yet they are not pleaſed, there is ſomething wanting; they *poſſeſs* enough, but they *enjoy* little, and their Souls are empty while their Arms are full. So fatal and unavoidable is the unhappineſs of Man, whether he has the things of this World, or has them not. If he has them not, then he pines and languiſhes for want of them, and frets with Envy againſt thoſe that have them.

them. And if he has them, yet the matter is not mended, for then he is troubled at their Vanity, and ſighs to ſee himſelf ſo baulkt and diſappointed in them.

They will therefore eaſily be brought to confeſs that the *paſt* and *preſent* are all over Vanity. All the Queſtion is concerning what is to *come*. And though, ſince the paſt and preſent were once future, they have all the reaſon in the World to ſuſpect the ſame of that part of Life which remains; *viz.* That when it comes to be preſent it will be as vain as thoſe other Futures were when Preſent or Paſt, yet (ſo ſtrange and unaccountable is their ſtupidity) 'tis moſt certain that they do not. No, on the contrary, though they need but conſult their Memory for the Vanity of their paſt Life, and their preſent Senſe for the Vanity of what they now enjoy, though their Life has been all along till now, and is now nothing but Diſappointment, yet (ſuch is the Magick that has inchanted them) they cannot forbear fancying that they ſhall find greater Contentment in that which is *behind*, that their Happy Days are yet to come, that they ſhall one time or other be better pleaſed and ſatisfied with their Condition, and that that Happineſs which has hitherto been too ſlippery for their hold, and like a Shadow or a Vapour has ſlipt through their graſping Arms, ſhall one Day be confin'd within the Circle of their Embraces. Hence they paſs on to *Fictions* and *Suppoſitions*, projecting Models of Happineſs to themſelves, and imagining how well 'twould be with them, and how finely they ſhould enjoy themſelves, if they were but in ſuch and ſuch Circumſtances. Thus they Fancy, or rather thus they *Dream*, and in the ſtrength of this weak Imagination, they begin every Day with a freſh expectation, enter upon new Charges and Labours, as the credulous *Chymiſt* does in the flattering Search of his *Elixir*, and put forward with a

trembling Paſſion in the Chaſe of Happineſs, which ſome of them purſue ſo eagerly, and are for overtaking ſo very ſoon, that they quicken their pace, and are for *living faſt* as they call it, though they overtake nothing by it in the Event but an early Grave, and in a very literal ſenſe run themſelves *out* of *Breath.*

This is the Sentiment and the Conduct of Men, thus they think, and thus they act, or rather thus they Dream, and thus they walk in their ſleep. But if they will hear a Man of more Wiſdom and Experience than themſelves, he will tell them that *all that cometh is Vanity.* 'Tis ſo, and they will find it ſo, one part of Life after another, as faſt as it cometh. For indeed as long as it is *coming*, or to *come*, its Vanity does not appear; on the contrary there is nothing thought of then but Content and Satisfaction, nothing but *Elyſian* Proſpects, Dreams of Happineſs, and Landskips of Paradiſe. For there is a ſtrange Fallacy in *hereafter*, and Diſtance which leſſens Objects to the Eye, magnifies them to the Mind. We are big with the Hopes of that part of Life which is coming on, and live Day after Day upon the Fancy of what to morrow will produce, like the Spectators of a Play ſtill in expectation of the next Scene, but yet when to morrow comes we find it juſt like yeſterday, Vain and without Content, and ſo will every to *morrow* be when it comes to be to *day.*

But yet this inchanted Sleep hangs ſtill in our Eyes, and we will dream on, and when we have ſet the Day for ſuch an Enjoyment, we long with as much Impatience for the happy Seaſon as the *Adulterous Eye* does for the ſlow Twilight, complain of the heavy progreſs of Time, and are contriving how to paſs the dull *Interim* away that delays our Pleaſure, and enviouſly ſtands between us and our promiſed Entertainment. But yet when the long-look'd for Happineſs arrives we find it quite another thing in the Enjoyment than

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it was in the *Idea*, that it will not bear the weight we lay upon it, that it neither anſwers our Expectations, nor ſatisfies our Deſires. We find in ſhort that there is nothing in it, and ſo we are ſerv'd from day to day, and ſo ſhall be as long as we live, even *all the Days of our Vanity.*

'Tis in the courſe of Life as when a Man walks or rides in a *Fog*. In the very place where he moves the thin ſubtle Vapour ſeems as nothing, and is hardly viſible, but at ſome diſtance from him it appears of ſo thick and maſſy a conſiſtence that he fancies it would ſenſibly reſiſt his Touch, and that he could embrace it in his Arms. But yet when he arrives to the deſign'd place, he finds himſelf in the thin again, and the *Phantaſtick Solid* is remov'd from him to a further diſtance. Juſt ſo the Happineſs of this Life is always to come, ſtill at ſome remove from us, never *actual* and *preſent*. For whenever it is ſo it vaniſhes into a thin nothing, and is loſt as ſoon as found. We think we *ſhall* be happy, but we never think we *are* ſo; and moſt certain it is we ſhall never be here of that Opinion; for *all that cometh is Vanity*. So that in this ſenſe alſo as well as in that intended by St. *James*, what is our Life but a *Vapour? Jam.* 4. 14.

Men commonly think of no other Diſappointment but only the not having what they deſire, and this in their Language is called not to *ſucceed*; but if they do indeed thus ſucceed and accompliſh their Wiſh they will find another, and if I miſtake not, a worſe Diſappointment, the not *enjoying* what they have, the Diſappointment of *Fruition*. I call it a worſe Diſappointment, for this as well as ſome other Reaſons that might be aſſigned, becauſe 'tis ſo neceſſary, perpetual and unavoidable. The firſt ſort of Diſappointment may be often prevented by wiſe Management. 'Tis not neceſſary a Man ſhould always loſe his longing, and miſs of what he deſires. No, he may ſometimes

compaſs his Point, and obtain the thing that he wills. But no Management or Addreſs, no Skill or Contrivance can prevent the ſecond, no, nor any *Succeſs* neither; for 'tis with the Succeſs that this Diſappointment begins. For no ſooner is any thing enjoyed, no ſooner does any of our Reverſions of Happineſs fall, but 'tis weigh'd in the Ballance and found wanting; *All that cometh is Vanity.*

Thus it has been from the beginning, and thus it will be to the end of Life, every part of which is a Cheat, a Deluſion, a Lie, and every Man that lives walks in a *vain Shadow*, in the Fog we were but now ſpeaking of, till his walk is at an end, and the weary Traveller repoſes himſelf in the Grave. He that is *young* thinks it a wonderful Happineſs to live a great while, but when he has obtain'd his Wiſh, does he find that Satisfaction in it? And ſo he that is *Poor* and *Low* in the World fancies it a kind of Heaven to be Rich and Great; but when he is ſo does he find it ſuch a Happy State as he before imagin'd? Could I then lengthen out my Span to an *Antediluvian* ſtretch, what ſhould I be the better, or what great matter ſhould I find in it! 'Twould be a mere nothing, not only when paſt, but even while preſent. Beſides more *Sins* and more *Diſappointments*, I ſhould only repeat the ſame things over a little oftner, and make more frequent *Turnings* in the ſame *Circle*. And ſo for Wealth or Preferment, could I be Rich or Great I ſhould not find that Light and Luſtre in it which now at a diſtance flaſhes and ſparkles in my Eye, but ſhould quickly grow ſick of that State my ſelf, which perhaps another would ſtill envy in me.

But what if I ſhould become *Wiſe* and *Knowing?* Why then I ſhould be leſs pleas'd than ever, both with my ſelf and with the World about me. I ſhould then be leſs able to bear the Follies and Impertinencies of Converſation, which would ſtrike more diſagree-

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ably upon my more delicate Senſe, as harſh Sounds do upon a Nice and well-tuned Ear; that which pleaſes me now would not reliſh with me then, nay I know not what would, for I ſhould ſo ſee through the Vanity of every thing, as to take pleaſure in Nothing. For when all's done, the Pleaſure of this Life is Founded upon *Ignorance*, and the Wiſe Man can find no Paradiſe here, though the Fool can. 'Tis in this reſpect alſo as well as in regard of its Tranſientneſs, like the Pleaſure of a *Dream*, becauſe owing to *Sleep*. And it laſts as long as thoſe Phantaſtick Pleaſures uſe to do; that is, till a Man is *awake*, till he recovers the uſe of his Senſes, till his Eyes are open, till he comes to himſelf, (as 'tis ſaid of the young Prodigal, *Luk.* 15.) till he begins to think, reflect and conſider, and then it vaniſhes like a Dream when one is *awake*, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 73. So that a Mans Wiſdom would but awake him from a Golden Dream, rob him of a kind and obliging Errour, diſcover to him his Poverty as well as his Ignorance, and make him ſee the Falſeneſs of that Coyn by its Light, which paſs'd well enough with him in the Dark. So true would he find that of the Wiſe as well as Great King, *In much Wiſdom is much Grief, and he that increaſes Knowledge increaſes Sorrow.* Our Suppoſition was here made good, *Solomon* had Wiſdom as well as Wealth and Honour, and he found that as vain as the other two, his Wiſdom that diſcover'd the Vanity of other things, at length diſcover'd that of it ſelf, even the *Light* it ſelf proved to be but a *Shadow*, and ſo 'tis in every thing elſe: For, *All that cometh is Vanity.*

And there is clear and evident Reaſon for all this. For God having made us for the Enjoyment of Himſelf, has accordingly proportioned our Capacities to the Immenſe Good of his own Nature; and though he has limited every other Senſe and Faculty about us, yet he has ſet no Bounds to our *Deſires*, but has given

a kind of *Infinity* to our *Wills*, wherein by the way conſiſts the principal part of the Divine Image and Reſemblance in us. And therefore 'tis abſolutely impoſſible we ſhould be ſatisfied with any thing here, let us enjoy what we will, becauſe we ſhall ſtill deſire beyond what we enjoy. 'Tis true indeed upon the ſame Grounds a Man may be here very *miſerable*, becauſe that ſtrong ſpring whereby he ſtands bent for Happineſs will make him the more ſenſible of thoſe Pains and Griefs which are contrary to it; but 'tis impoſſible that any thing in this World ſhould make him very *happy*.

But what then is Life worth at this Rate? Why truly not much, unleſs it be in order to a better State hereafter, and as 'tis an Opportunity for it. Nor do I know any great reaſon a Man has to deſire to live *longer*, unleſs it be that he may live *better*. But then does not this reflect upon the Goodneſs of God, that he would place ſo noble a Creature in ſuch poor Circumſtances, in a *barren and dry Land, where no water is* to quench that Fiery Thirſt which he has put in his Nature? No, as Man cannot be very happy here, ſo neither is it fit he ſhould. For however it might have been with *Adam* if he had continued Innocent, who perhaps might have had ſuch free and large Communications from God as would have made a true Paradiſe of a Garden, and turn'd his Terreſtrial State into a kind of Heaven; yet 'tis to be conſider'd that we are now Sinners, and as ſuch excluded from having any *Paradiſe* upon Earth by the ſame Sentence that caſt *Adam* out of his. We are now in a State of *Penance*, as well as in a State of *Tryal* and *Probation*, and therefore muſt not anticipate our Reward here, but be exerciſed with Vanity and Diſſatisfaction, which is that *ſore Travel* that God has laid upon the Sons of *Adam*, who though Heirs of Glory, and born to Crowns and Scepters in the other World, muſt yet inherit only

Dreams,

Dreams, Shadows, and Vanity in this, wherein *all that cometh is Vanity.* There is no Content to be found in any of the Enjoyments of this World, let a Man's ſhare of it, or ſtate in it be what it will, 'tis all but a Union of Cyphers, a Collection of Nothing, not worth a Thought, or a Wiſh, or a Tear; only in Religion and the Conſcientious diſcharge of one's Duty, and the practice of a good Life, (the only place where Men ſeek not for it) there is ſome real Content and true Satisfaction to be had, and the more we improve in Goodneſs the more Happy and Comfortable will our Lives be. According to the Obſervation of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 119. *I ſee that all things come to an end, but thy Commandment is exceeding broad.* Wherein he is not contradicted, but ſeconded by his Son *Solomon*, who tho' he inſcribed Vanity upon all things elſe, even upon *Wiſdom* and *Knowledge*, yet (which is not a little obſervable) found none in *Religion* and the *Fear* of God; but on the contrary, recommends theſe as the final reſult of all his Reflections upon the Vanity of things, and as the *whole* of Man, *Eccl.* 11. 13.

And yet after all, 'tis not all the Reaſoning in the World that will effectually convince Men of its Vanity, till the *Holy Spirit* of God ſhall work this Conviction in their Hearts by an inward *Sentiment* exceeding the force of all *Rational Light.* Convinc'd indeed they may be after a ſort, they ſee it by Reaſon, and find it by Experience. But they are not ſo convinc'd as to give over expecting and projecting, building Caſtles in the Air, and making up Fools Paradiſes to themſelves; not ſo convinc'd of the Vanity of Life as to lay down their fond dependencies upon what is to come of it, but in the midſt of all their Reflections and Experiences follow on as keenly upon the World, as if they were ignorant of its Vanity, and never had made Tryal of its Deceits. 'Tis plain therefore

therefore that this is only a General and Notional Conviction of the World's Vanity, ſuch as ſwims in the Brain, and floats in the Fancy, ſuch as muſing and thoughtful Men form to themſelves in a ſtudy, but preſently loſe and forget again aſſoon as they come abroad into this bewitching World. But now the *Holy Spirit* gives another ſort of Conviction of the Worlds Vanity, ſuch as is deep, lively, actual and abiding, ſuch as ſinks down into the bottom of our Spirits, and from thence as an inner ſpring actuates and inforces all our outward Motions, ſuch in one word as *Dying* Men have—. But I haſten to the Improvement that may be made of theſe Conſiderations to the uſe of Living. Briefly then,

1. If there be ſuch a univerſal Vanity diffuſed through the whole compaſs of Human Life, ſo that what comes on will be as little to our Satisfaction as what is gone and paſt, then this lays a conſiderable ground to confirm us in the belief and expectation of a *Future State*, it being not worth while for God to bring ſuch Noble Creatures into ſuch a vain as well as tranſitory World, if it were not in order to ſomewhat further. If God had not intended us for any other State than this, to take a turn or two here, and then ſink into our firſt nothing, he either would not have made us, or elſe he would have ſuited our Capacities to the narrow Meaſure of theſe Worldly Objects: And therefore ſince we find our ſelves ſo much above them as not poſſibly to be ſatisfied with them, may we not hence conclude that this Life is not our final or only State, but that there is another, and a better Life to come.

Again, 2. If this preſent World and Life be ſo all over Vanity, then we may hence learn the great Folly and Madneſs of *Sin*. 'Tis moſt certain that no Man ſins purely for Sins ſake. 'Tis the Conſideration of ſome Pleaſure or Advantage or other that induces him

him to it. *What will ye give me*, ſaid *Judas* to the Chief Prieſts, *and I will deliver him unto you.* And the ſame is the Language of every Sinner to thoſe three curſed Traders for Souls, the World, the Fleſh and the Devil, *What will ye give me?* Why, *All this will I give thee*, ſays the laſt of them, ſhewing him ſome of the vain Grandeurs or Pleaſures of this Tranſitory Life. He has the unhappy Advantage to come with ready Money in his hand (ſuch ſtuff as it is) for which the Needy and Covetous Sinner likes his Chap-Man, and accordingly deals with him. So that in all Sin there is at leaſt an implicit, if not an expreſs Contract, and every Sinner plainly makes a Bargain, ſelling his *Soul* as really and truly (though not always at the ſame Price) as *Judas* did the *Body* of our Saviour. But alas what a mad fooliſh Bargain is it? For what is it that he has in Exchange? Could the Devil make good his confident offer in the largeſt extent, when he ſays, *All this will I give thee*, yet what is that mighty *All*? What is there in this vain World, though a Man could be Maſter of the whole of it (according to our Saviour's Suppoſition) that ſhould induce him to do the leaſt Evil, to offend an Infinite God, and hazard a Happy, not to ſay Miſerable Eternity? *What Fruit*, ſays the Apoſtle, *had ye then in thoſe things*, *Rom.* 6. 21. What Fruit indeed, but the Fruits of *Sodom*, deceitful Viands, Aery Banquets, Phantaſtick Food, that is ſo far from ſatisfying the Hunger, that it will not ſo much as indure the Touch. And ſhall I ſell my Soul, my God, my Heaven for this? So that one may well put that Queſtion of the Pſalmiſt, *Are not they without underſtanding that work wickedneſs?* That do ſuch Work for ſuch Wages? They call themſelves indeed Rational Creatures, and ſome of them pretend more particularly to *Reaſon*, and ſet up for *Wits*, but have they ſo much as Common ſenſe or Underſtanding? Or rather may not every Sinner more

juſtly

juſtly ſay to the God he has offended in the words of an Humble Penitent, *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, and even as a Beaſt before thee.*

Again, 3. If all that cometh be Vanity as well as all that's paſt, then we have the leſs reaſon to fear Death, particularly that which we call an *untimely* one, and none at all to reckon upon the Pleaſures of a long Life. The leſs reaſon to fear Death, becauſe the World it takes us from is ſo very vain and little worth. And none to reckon upon the Pleaſures of a long Life, becauſe theſe Pleaſures are only in the Imagination, ſuch as thoſe who die early think they loſe, but thoſe who live longer do not find. For we do not advance in Happineſs as we do in Years, eſpecially if we grow wiſer with our Age, but tread the ſame Fairy-ring, and find nothing more in our Latter than in our Former Rounds, except only greater Toil and Wearineſs. Though therefore a Man ſhould live many Years, yet let him remember, not only the Days of *Darkneſs*, but the Days of *Light* too; For, *All that cometh is Vanity.*

Again, 4. and Laſtly, From the Conſideration of that conſtantly ſucceſſive Vanity, which as a Shadow always attends and keeps pace with this preſent Life, we may be further inſtructed to make the more careful Proviſion for another, to ſeek out for ſomething more laſting and ſatisfying, a *better* and a *more induring Subſtance*, even that *Inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven for us.* Conſidering what a ſad thing it would be firſt to walk all our Lives in a vain Shadow, and then to lie down in Sorrow, to have *Vanity* for our Portion here, and Eternal *Miſery* hereafter. The former we cannot avoid, but we may the Latter; and that we may all have the Wiſdom to do ſo, God of his Infinite Mercy grant through Jeſus Chriſt, to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be all Glory and Thankſgiving for ever. *Amen.*

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An Admonition Concerning two late Books, call'd *Diſcourſes of the Love of God.*

IN the firſt place I acknowledge the Perſons that appear againſt me to be Men of Conſiderable Character and Eminence in their ſeveral ways, and therefore would not have any thing that I ſhall further ſay upon this Occaſion to be interpreted to the Diminution or Diſparagement of either of them, to whom I mean nothing but Good Will, Honour and Reſpect.

Not that the Firſt of my Adverſaries has given me any Example of this. On the Contrary (though I am not over-quick at reſenting) I cannot but be Senſible, and ſo muſt any Indifferent Reader, of the unkindneſs and diſreſpect he expreſſes towards me, and with what Diſdain and Contempt he treats me. 'Tis true indeed he has been ſo Civil (to me ſhall I ſay, or to himſelf) as not to foul his Pen with dirty and Scurrilous Language, the too faſhionable Rhetorick of the Times, but yet the ſpiteful Ayr that runs through his Book too plainly ſhews with what Spirit and Temper he writes, and may juſtly tempt even Candor it ſelf to ſuſpect, that he that could allow himſelf ſo free an Indulgence of his Spleen and Prejudice, forbore the other rather out of Regard to *himſelf* than any kindneſs to his *Adverſary*, leſt he ſhould thereby bring his Breeding into queſtion, and forfeit the very plauſible and agreeable Character of a *Civil* Writer. Which yet I think he has in great Meaſure done however: For ſure *good*

Nature

Nature is a very conſiderable Ingredient of *good Manners*, and a Man cannot very well be ſaid to be *Civil* to any one to whom at the ſame time he plainly appears to be very *unkind*.

Why our ingenious Author *has* uſed me thus I partly Gueſs, though why he *ſhould* I know no juſt reaſon, eſpecially conſidering the different Treatment he had from me upon a like publick Occaſion. Which I cannot mention without telling him by the way that as if I had made *no* reply to his late Treatiſe, I had not been in his Debt, ſo if I make him a *Civil* one he is *doubly* in mine.

But to let that paſs, I know nothing more unbecoming either a Searcher after Truth, or an Advocate for it than Peeviſhneſs and ill-Nature, nor how this Author could be guilty of a greater Incongruity than while he was writing of the *Love* of *God* to let fall ſuch broad indications of Diſaffection towards his *Neighbour*, eſpecially being unprovoked, I might ſay Obliged, and upon the very firſt Aggreſs.

When indeed the *Saw* of *Contention* has been drawn backward and forward for ſome while, no wonder if at length it wax hot, and great Allowances are to be made for Men that grow out of Temper after they have been chaff'd and warm'd with long Diſpute, as alſo *Some* for him that is the Reſpondent, and upon the defenſive part; But for one that is the firſt Aggreſſor to come on ſo fiercely, and at firſt daſh to fall upon a Man like a red-hot piece of Iron upon an *Anvil*, burning and ſparkling as it falls, this I think is againſt all the Meaſures of *Decorum*, and that common Civility that is due from Man to Man, not or ſay from one Chriſtian to another. And he will hardly perſwade the World to believe (were it more Candidly diſpoſed than it is) that he had either Truth or Charity in his *View* that ſhall allow himſelf ſuch a free Range in Malicious Railery, and whoſe Expreſſions

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are ſo high-ſeaſon'd with Spite and ill-Nature. He may talk of *preventing Miſtakes about Religion*, &c. but the jealous World will be apt to believe this only a good Covering for a bad Deſign, and that whatever ſhews of Zeal for truth or Religion may ſwim at top, there is an old Grudge at the Bottom.

I am not ſo wedded to an *Hypotheſis* (whatever the Kindneſs of this Adverſary may inſinuate) but that I value *Truth* more, and if I know my own Heart, ſhould gladly and thankfully receive the pooreſt Endeavours from the meaneſt hand, whoſe ſincere Intention I have reaſon to believe is to reduce me to it. But when Men ſhall write upon a *Pique*, and inſtead of oppoſing their Adverſaries Concluſions ſhall reflect ſpitefully upon their Perſons, as the Caſe is then far otherwiſe, ſo 'tis no wonder if the Reſentment be ſo too. I do not therefore thank our Author at all for the Pains he has taken in his Book, which I cannot think written out of love to *Me* at leaſt, if out of any to *Truth* (for if his Buſineſs had been only to convince me, and ſet my Underſtandings at rights, what need ſo much Perſonal Reflection and Spiteful Inſinuation) but rather to give vent to an *Angry* and uneaſie *Humour* of his own, and to entertain his Reader at the Expence of my Reputation. If therefore I *Forgive* him 'tis ſufficient, which I aſſure him I heartily do, Praying for him among thoſe that *deſpiteſully uſe me*, and wiſhing him a better Spirit, and that he would endeavour to reform his Temper, which I'm afraid is more *unſerviceable* to Religion than any *Hypotheſis* of mine can be. And for his better Aſſiſtance herein I would humbly Commend to his Reading and ſerious Conſideration part of one of the New Moral Eſſays of M. *Placette*, (they are *Proteſtant* Eſſays, and therefore he need not be afraid of any *Myſtic* Divinity in them) Vol. 2. *Pag.* 284. concerning the Evil of abuſing Men in Print.

My Second Adverſary treats me with a little more

Civility and Reſpect, for which I thank him. And yet there are here and there ſome Roughneſſes, little Flirts, and not very good-Natured Reflections and Inſinuations that need ſome allowance, though not more than (I thank God) I can give. Only there is one Paſſage which I take very unkindly of him, and for which I think he owes me ſome Account, I may ſay Reparation. He ſays, *Page* 62. that I Charge the Authors of the Vulgar Expoſition with *Inſincerity* and *love to their Luſts.* And that I do this *Plainly* and *Confidently.* And upon this he proceeds to Sound an Alarm, and to ſtir up all the Clergy of the Nation to engage and riſe up in Arms againſt me, by ſaying, That *in defence of their own Reputations, and the Reputation of their traduc'd Brethren, all the whole Body of the Clergy who differ,* &c. *ſtand bound to vindicate themſelves from thoſe vile Imputations which I caſt upon them.*

Now he cannot but be ſenſible that there may be an odious and invidious manner of expreſſing even a *Truth.* Which may be repreſented either nakedly as it is, or with ſome tenderneſs and mollification, or elſe odiouſly and by way of aggravation. To the firſt of theſe Juſtice would perſwade, to the ſecond Kindneſs and good-Nature, but the third is altogether unfair, and unbecoming a Man that pretends to either of the other. And yet is not this the thing he does by me? Does he not aggravate my Senſe, and give it an harſher Ayr by his way of expreſſing it? He ſays in down-right terms, that I charge theſe Men with *Inſincerity*, and *Love* to their *Luſts*, and that I do it *plainly* and *confidently.* Now any one that reads this would be apt to think that I had Directly, Formally, and Expreſly Charged them with theſe things: But do I do ſo? He knows that I do not; and I appeal to my Words, or to any indifferent Conſiderer of them, whether I do or no, and withal whether he has not done unfairly by me, by thus odiouſly repreſenting

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ing me, though the Charge it ſelf, as to the Matter and Subſtance of it, had been never ſo true.

But neither Secondly is it true. 'Tis not true in the firſt place that I charge the Men with *Inſincerity*. Had I ſaid that they were Conſcious to themſelves that this was not the Senſe, and yet would exhibit it as the Senſe againſt the Perſwaſion of their Judgments and the Light of their Minds, this indeed would be to tax them with Inſincerity. But do I ſay ſo? I do not ſay that upon the whole they were ſenſible that this was not the meaning of the Text; on the contrary, I ſuppoſe them, all things conſider'd, to be forc'd to take up with it as low as it was, for want of a due foundation for a higher; as would be ſeen if he had quoted me throughout. All that I ſay is, that they could not but be ſenſible that herein they did not riſe up to the *Letter*. But by his good leave, 'tis one thing to be ſenſible that ſuch a Senſe falls ſhort of the Letter, and another to be ſenſible that it is not the true Senſe, unleſs he will ſay that never any Man thought that a *True* Senſe, which at the ſame time he knew not to be the *Literal* Senſe of a Text. Which he muſt, and does by conſequence ſay, when he makes me Charge the Vulgar Expoſitors with Inſincerity, which fixes that very Imputation of Inſincerity upon all the *Proteſtant Interpreters* againſt the *Papiſts*, which he ſuppoſes me to lay upon thoſe of our *own Church*. And now he has made a fine piece of work on't. But where then is the pretended Inſincerity? I know of none, nor do I Charge any Man, or Body of Men, with any ſuch thing, though whether there be not ſome body in the World that I might now Charge with it, I leave him to conſider.

Then neither ſecondly do I Charge them with *Love* to their *Luſts*, at leaſt not as he repreſents it. For firſt, his Words imply as if I Charg'd it upon them in particular, whereas I ſpeak of Men in general, not excluding my ſelf, ſaying, *Were it not a matter of Pra-*

ctice wherein our Paſſions and Intereſts are concern'd. Again ſecondly, He ſays *Love* to their Luſts, whereas I ſay only *Luſts*. But now Luſts and Love to their Luſts are two diſtinct things; the former importing only the Natural Corruption of Human Nature, that propenſion that is in us to ſenſible Good, which is the ſame with Original Sin, and the latter the free Adheſion and voluntary Obſequiouſneſs of the Will to that Corruption, which is the ſame with Actual Sin. And how does he wrong me then when he imputes this Latter to me, whereas tis plain that I ſpeak only of the Former. Any one that hears him ſay, that I Charge ſuch Men with Love to their Luſts, would by the Natural import of the Words (eſpecially when joyn'd with the dreadful Alarm that follows upon them) be led to think that I had Charged them, and them in particular, with a wilful Adheſion to, and Complyance with their Luſts, whereas I ſpeak only of that general depravation of Human Nature, that Corrupt *Adam* which is in every Man, and which indiſpoſes Men for the reception of ſuch Truths as croſs and oppoſe that Natural Bias, which I make to be the great diſadvantage of *Moral* Truths, in compariſon of thoſe which are *Phyſical* and *Mathematical*, *&c.* This is the Drift of my Meaning, as may appear by the whole Scope of the Place referr'd to, than which I think nothing could be more innocent or inoffenſive in it ſelf, how choquant or diſtaſtful ſoever it may appear as our Reverend Author has been pleaſed to dreſs it up, and repreſent it; with what deſign I will not aſſume to judge, but I am ſure with no great Prudence, ſince he cannot but know, as well as the reſt of the World, how well affected I am to the *Engliſh Clergy*, and that I need not him, nor any other Reconciler to make me think better or more honourably of them than I do. But as the moſt ſerious things may be Burleſqu'd, ſo the moſt innocent things may be render'd offenſive and diſobliging, either by a falſe

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or an untoward Repreſentation of them. And after he has thus miſuſed me, then to beat up for Voluntiers, and to endeavour to animate and ſtir up the whole Clergy againſt me as a Common Enemy, who mean no harm to any Body—— But I will ſay no more, than that by it he has utterly forfeited all the Thanks which perhaps he might otherwiſe pretend due to him for his kind Intentions and Endeavours.

I confeſs however that I did not expect to be ſo publickly aſſaulted by a Neighbour and a Friend, who methinks might with greater *Decorum* have left ſo ungrateful a Work to another hand, eſpecially at this time of Day, when we have no need of quarrelling among our ſelves for want of Adverſaries to try our Skill upon. But it ſeems, contrary to the Proverb, Neceſſity has now *too much Law*, and Neighbourhood, Friendſhip, Peace, *Decorum*, and every thing muſt be ſacrificed to that which is *better* than Sacrifice. But to the Point.

In order to which be it premiſed, that in all Perſonal Diſputation or Controverſie an Objection carries in it this Addition to the Nature of an Argument in general, that 'tis an Argument againſt ſomething before laid down or maintain d by the Party oppoſed. So that an Objection is an Argument, and ſomething more, and conſequently there goes more to make an Objection good, than to make an Argument good. For to make an Argument good, 'tis ſufficient that it be True as to Matter and Form; but to make an Objection good, it muſt not only be a *Truth*, but a *Contradictory* Truth. So that though a good Objection be alſo a good Argument (becauſe Objection includes Argument in it) yet a good Argument is not always a good Objection, and that becauſe an Objection implies ſomething more than bare Argument as ſuch, as being not only an *Argument*, but a *Contradictory* Argument.

And therefore though there be but one general way whereby an Argument may be Faulty, *viz.* by reaſon

of the *Untruth* of it, either as to Matter or Form, yet an Objection may be Faulty two ways, either for want of *Truth*, or for want of *Contradiction*; that is, it may be Faulty either ſimply as an Argument, or as an Objection, or if you will, either as to the Argument part, or as to the Objection part of it. Either the Thing Objected is not True, or if it be True, yet it is not a Contradictory Truth, and ſo a bad *Objection*, though perhaps a good *Argument*.

Accordingly there are two general ways of dealing with an *Objection*, according as the deficiency of it is in one or other of theſe reſpects. If it be truly Contradictory, but not abſolutely true, as to the Matter or Form of it, then I have ſomething to *deny*, the Syllogiſm it ſelf if wrong in Form, or ſome Propoſition of it if wrong as to Matter, and that again either Major or Minor, or Conſequence according to the Matter of the Propoſitions, and the Form of the Syllogiſm.

But if the Objection be Abſolutely true both Materially and Formally, but not truly Contradictory, what is to be done then? Why in this Caſe B. *Sanderſon* ſays in his *Appendix de uſu Logicæ*, pag. 273. that the Concluſion is to be denied. There are Three Things, ſays he, that may be denied, the Concluſion, the Form, and the Propoſition The Concluſion if it be Forreign, the Form if Vitious, and the Propoſition if Falſe. And again ſays he, *Si Opponens aut in primo Syllogiſmo non Contradicat Theſi Reſpondentis, aut in reliquis non inferat propoſitionem ab eo proxime Negatam, Reſpondens habet negare Concluſionem.* But then he after explains what he Means by Denying, *viz.* by rejecting it as not to the purpoſe, or (which he ſays is all one) by admitting the whole Argument. In which Account tho' his meaning be right enough, if rightly underſtood, yet I think he has not expreſs'd himſelf with either his uſual, or with Sufficient Clearneſs. For as 'tis moſt Certain in the general that the Concluſion can never be denied if the Premiſes are allow'd to be True (becauſe the Concluſion is contain'd in the Premiſes) and therefore the Denial when any is neceſſary, properly falls upon one of the *Premiſes*, not upon the *Concluſion*, ſo 'tis alſo moſt certain that in the preſent Caſe there is no need of denying any thing, there being indeed nothing at all to be denied. And therefore this great (and otherwiſe very Logical) Writer did not do ſo well in uſing the word *Deny*, however Interpreted afterwards by *Rejecting*, in reference to the *Concluſion*, ſince Denying is always applied to the *Truth* of the Objection, and that as to the Matter, or as to the Form of it, in relation to the Former of which we ſay *Negatur Propoſitio*, and in relation to the Latter, *Negatur Syllogiſmus*. But now here the Objection is ſuppoſed to

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be Abſolutely True both as to the Material and alſo as to the Formal part of it. And therefore 'tis moſt certain that here is nothing to be *Denied*, or that can be ſaid with any Propriety to be ſo. And then again, whereas he ſays, *by Rejecting it as Impertinent, or (which is the ſame) by admitting the whole Argument*, I cannot think this neither to be a clear Account of the Matter. For Rejecting and Admitting are in themſelves ſo far from being the ſame, that they are Formally Contrary, and Vertually Contradictory to each other, and are no otherwiſe to be reconciled than by the difference of Reſpects, which yet he has not here aſſign'd.

Let us ſee then whether this Matter may not be ſet in a little clearer Light. The Queſtion is what is to be done when the Objection is Abſolutely true, both Materially and Formally, but not truly Contradictory? To which it is anſwer'd in the firſt Place, Abſolutely and without any qualification, that here is Nothing to be *Denied*, the Matter and Form of the Argument being ſuppoſed to be True. And as there is nothing that can juſtly be denied, becauſe all is ſuppoſed to be true, ſo neither has the Reſpondent any Reaſon, Perſwaſive or Inducement to deny any thing, ſince though a Truth 'tis yet an uncontradictory one, and ſuch as though admitted does not concern him, nor affect the Theſis he Maintains. What then is he to do? I anſwer Secondly, That he is e'n frankly to admit the whole. For what ſhould he do elſe? He *cannot* deny it becauſe it is *True*, and he *need* not deny it becauſe 'tis alſo an *uncontradictory* Truth. He muſt then, and may ſafely grant it intirely. Not that the Admiſſion is ſo intire Neither, but that it *Conſequentially* implies a Rejection too, though in a different Reſpect. That is, he Admits it as a Truth, but then by doing ſo does by Conſequence Reject it as an Impertinent unconcerning Truth, (ſince if it were to the purpoſe, and againſt him, he would not *Admit*, but *Deny* it) or if you will Admits it as an Argument, but Rejects it as an Objection, becauſe not a Contradictory Argument, as every good Objection ſhould be.

But then it may be further Conſider'd (which is all that can be ſaid in this Matter) that as in denying any part of an Argument, either as to Matter or Form, the Reſpondent may be ſometimes Obliged to aſſign ſome Reaſon of his Denial (for otherwiſe there would be no End of Diſputation, ſince one Fool may deny more than a Hundred Wiſe Men can prove) ſo likewiſe in this Second way of dealing with an Objection by admitting the Argument as True, but rejecting it as Impertinent, the Reſpondent may ſometimes be concern'd to aſſign a

Reaſon of his Procedure, which is to be done only by Stating his own *Theſis*, and by ſhewing that the Concluſion of his Oppoſers Argument does not really Contradict it. This indeed is a ſhort Cut, but 'tis all that can or need be done in this Caſe; and when he has done this, he has done as much as his Oppoſer can juſtly demand, and though in this way of proceeding he has nothing of *Denying*, *Solving*, *Refuting* &c. he has yet anſwered his Objection as fully as ſuch an Objection is Capable of being Anſwer'd.

Now thus ſtands the Caſe between me and my late worthy Oppoſers, who have both of them (eſpecially the Second) taken a gread deal of Pains *not to contradict me*. They pretend to write againſt me, and ſeem not to doubt but that they have Confuted me, and yet do not ſo much as *attaque* me. Not attending ſufficiently to the Principles, nor to the Concluſion of the Diſcourſe they offer to oppoſe, nor duly conſidering the exact ſtate of the Queſtion, they miſapprehend my Meaning, and ſo ſuppoſing me to hold what indeed I do not, they run on upon a wrong Ground, very elaborately ſet themſelves to prove a Concluſion that is not Contradictory to mine, and ſo fight, not with me, but with a Shadow of their own. In ſhort, they both harp all along upon the ſame falſe String, and beſtow great Pains to prove a wrong Propoſition: Wrong I mean not *abſolutely* in it ſelf, but in *relation* to *me*, as not being truly Contradictory to what I maintain, and ſo are guilty of that Fallacy which in Logick is call'd *Ignoratio Elenchi*, as St. *James* would have been in relation to St. *Paul*, (ſuppoſing he had intended to contradict him) when he ſays that a Man is not juſtified by Faith only, he not taking Faith in the ſame Senſe, when he ſays a Man is *not* juſtified by Faith only, as St. *Paul* does when he ſays that he *is*, and ſo not truly Contradicting him, becauſe not denying the ſame thing that the other affirms, whereas all Contradiction ſhould be *ad Idem*. And therefore I look upon my ſelf to be no further concern'd with my preſent Adverſaries (if I may ſo call them) than only to grant them, without any more ado, the main body of their Argument, allowing it to be True, but at the ſame time rejecting it as an Uncontradictory, and therefore not Pertinent Truth. I ſay I have no more upon my hands than this, unleſs it be for their Satisfaction to give them ſome Account why I do thus, which may be done in a little room.

I remark then that the whole Argument of the preſent Controverſie is a mere *Equivoque* upon theſe two Terms, *Love* and *Good*, which my Adverſaries (I hope they will pardon me for giving them a wrong Title) are pleaſed to take in the moſt large and popular Senſe, and not according to that due ſtrictneſs wherein I do, and wherein they ſhould take them to contradict me.

me. Thus as to the term (*Good*) they uſe it according to the utmoſt Latitude, as it comprehends all that which any manner of way contributes to our good, miniſters to our conveniency, and is better for us to have than to be without. And taking (*Good*) in this large popular Senſe, they contend that the World is good, that the Creatures are good, that Meat is good, and Drink is good, *&c.* and for the truth of this appeal to *Experience*. And no doubt all this is true. But herein they do not Contradict me, who uſe the term (*Good*) in a ſtricter, and as I think more Philoſophical Senſe, meaning by it that which really and truly does us good, or is the efficient Cauſe of Pleaſure to us. In which Senſe it is that I deny the World, or any Creature in it, to be a Good to us, truly and properly ſpeaking, becauſe not efficient Cauſes of the leaſt degree of Happineſs or Good to us, wherein I am not at all contradicted by their ſaying that the Creatures are good in the other larger Senſe, eſpecially conſidering that at the ſame time that I deny them to be *Efficient Cauſes*, I allow them to be *Occaſions* of Good to us.

Then again as to the term (*Love*) this alſo they uſe in the large and popular Acceptation, as it extends even to the *willing the uſe of a thing*, as ſuppoſe of Fire when we are Cold, or Meat and Drink when we are Hungry and Thirſty, and the like. But now I uſe the term (*Love*) more ſtrictly, and it may be more Philoſophically, for the Souls uniting it ſelf to any thing as its true Good, Beatifick Object, or the Cauſe of its Good or Happineſs. And accordingly in this ſtrict and rigorous Senſe of Love I make God the only due Object of it, and deny that the World, or any Creature in it, is to be loved by us, and that becauſe God only, not the Creature, is our true Good, Beatifick Object, and Efficient Cauſe of all our Happineſs. Whereas they taking the word (*Love*) more largely and popularly, as it comprehends within its Latitude even the willing the uſe of a thing, contend that God is not the only Object of our Love, but that the Creature may alſo be loved by us. Wherein indeed they ſay true, but do not Contradict me, eſpecially conſidering that at the ſame time that I deny that the Creatures are to be loved *as* our Good, I allow that they may be ſought and uſed *for* our Good.

Serm. *Of the Love of God.* Pag. 74.

And indeed ſetting aſide the Paſſage laſt quoted, which fully expreſſes my meaning, and ſeveral others which I might quote both from the Diſcourſe it ſelf, and the Letters which Comment upon it, to the like purpoſe, the very Principles I go upon, my way of arguing upon thoſe Principles, and the whole Current of the Diſcourſes themſelves do all ſo jointly combine to determine

termine my Meaning, that a Man who is awake when he reads them, might juſtly wonder how my Adverſaries could miſs it ſo widely, or ſuppoſe me to mean ſo abſurdly as they do. Nay, the very Nature of the Thing ſpeaks it ſelf. For ſuppoſing I had not laid in any Cautions againſt ſuch a Conſtruction, nor had dropt one word whereby my Meaning might have been explain'd, yet if they will but allow me to have Common Senſe (which their very Writing againſt me ſuppoſes me to have) how could they imagine that my words were intended in ſuch a Meaning as by their oppoſition of it they put upon me!

As firſt of all for the World's being a *Good*, can theſe Men imagine that I ever meant to deny the Creatures to be good in the lax and popular ſenſe of the Word, meaning, that they contribute ſome way or other to our good, and ſerve to the Neceſſity and Conveniency of Life, ſo that it is better to have them than to be without them? Or do they in good earneſt think that I would ſcruple in the ordinary way of ſpeaking, to call the Furniture of my Houſe, or the Books of my Study, my *Goods*, eſpecially ſince the late augmentation it has received by their two Learned Diſcourſes? There is indeed a Senſe wherein I do not, cannot allow them to be my *Goods*, but ſure not in the Senſe that is pretended.

And then again as to *not loving* the *Creatures*, can any Body imagine that 'twas ever my intent to deny the lawfulneſs of loving them in the lax and popular ſenſe, as that ſignifies the willing the uſe of them, or the deſiring to have them, or ſerve our ſelves of them for our preſent Accommodation and Conveniency while we are here? Or that I would ſcruple to conform to the common way of ſpeaking, by ſaying, that I deſire Meat when I am Hungry, or Drink when I am Thirſty, or Cloaths when I want them to keep me warm, or Phyſick when I have occaſion for it for my Health: Or that I would make any doubt to ſay, I love a Pen that writes well, or a Knife that cuts well, or a Horſe that goes eaſie, or an Adverſary that reaſons cloſely and to the purpoſe. There is indeed a Senſe wherein I cannot allow the Love of theſe things, but ſure not in that popular Senſe which is pleaded for, which as my Diſcourſes do not condemn, ſo I can ſafely ſay it was never in my Thoughts to deny.

To what purpoſe then does Dr. *Wh*--- lay himſelf out ſo profuſedly to prove that the Creatures are good, quoting that Text for it, *P.* 8. that every Creature of God is good, and nothing to be refuſed, if it be received with Thanksgiving, for it is ſanctified by the Word and Prayer. Upon which he gravely Comments, *by the Word giving us Authority to eat of every Herb, and every living Creature*, quoting for it *Gen.* 9. 3. *And by Prayer, asking theſe good Creatures of him who is the giver of every good thing.* From whence he very ſolemnly draws two Weighty (I

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do not ſay *Heavy*) Inferences: Firſt, *That every Creature of God is good, i. e. good for Food to be received by us,* (I fancy 'twas about Dinner-time when he wrote this, and he thought he was ſaying Grace) *and therefore for our Food and conſequently for our good. And why elſe is it to be received with Thanksgiving, for what we are obliged to thank him for is ſure his Bleſſing, and our good.* Secondly, *That every Creature which is thus good for us muſt be deſired of God, it being ſanctified or fitted for our uſe by interceſſion to God for the enjoyment of it. Ibid.* To what purpoſe again does he tell us that Temporal things are good becauſe God promiſes them as the Reward of our Obedience, and that Rubies are good, p. 10. becauſe Wiſdom is better than Rubies, *Prov.* 8. 11. *p.* 11. And that Life, Plenty, and the Fruits of the Earth, Kine, Sheep, are good things, becauſe in certain Caſes God threatens to deprive Men of them. *Ibid.* And that Temporal Enjoyments are good things becauſe Mens Iniquities are ſaid to with hold good things from them. *p.* 12. And becauſe they are God's Bleſſings, and his Gifts, and are alſo call'd the good of a Man's Labour, *Ibid. Eccleſ.* 3. 13. And becauſe in the Story of *Lot* we have twice mention of his Goods; and in that of *Jacob*, that he carried away all his Goods. And becauſe St. *Luke* ſays, of him that taketh away thy Goods ask them not again. And becauſe the Rich Man is introduced, ſaying, There will I beſtow all my Fruits and my Goods. As alſo *Abraham* ſaying to *Dives*, Son remember that thou in thy Life-time receiveſt thy good things. As alſo *Zacheus* ſaying, Half of my Goods I give to the Poor. And ſays St. *Paul*, Tho' I give all my Goods to the Poor, and have not Charity---And he Commends the believing *Jews* for taking joyfully the ſpoiling of their Goods. And then comes in the Wiſe Man alſo frequently informing us that it is the good of Man to Eat and Drink, and make his Soul Enjoy the good of all his Labour. *p.* 13. Well, here are a great many *good* things reckon'd up, and yet I can tell him of a very good thing (though not always well uſed) that he has left out, and that is a good *Concordance*, which I find has done him good Service.

To what purpoſe again is he ſo free of his Pains and of his Readers Patience in proving ſo largely (in Senſe as well as Compaſs) that the Creatures may be lov'd, that we may deſire our daily Bread, *p.* 5. that we may move towards our Meat when we are Hungry, and Drink when Thirſty, *p.* 14. and that we may rejoice in theſe things, and that the *Jews* were Commanded to rejoice in their Feaſts, *p.* 7. telling us withal that the Contrary Doctrine (as he will have it, though I know of no ſuch) is contrary to our Prayers for daily Bread, to God's Promiſes of Temporal good things, and his Threats of Temporal Evils, to the repreſentation of them as God's Gifts and Bleſſings, and our good Things,

Things. *p.* 8. To God's Command to Rejoice in them, *p.* 15. To the Induſtry required by God to procure theſe things, and his Bleſſing promiſed to that Induſtry, *p.* 21. And that 'tis inconſiſtent with our Obligation to pray for Temporal Bleſſings, and with the Prayers of our own and Antient Liturgies, With the Praiſes due to God for Temporal Bleſſings, and with the Thanksgivings for them, uſed in our Liturgy, *p.* 22. That it tends to depretiate the Divine Gifts, to teach Men to ſlight God's Promiſes (he might as well have ſaid to ſtand upon their Heads) and Contemn his Threats, *p.* 24. to deſtroy all Induſtry in our Calling, and that it lays the vileſt Imputation upon the Diſpenſations of God's Providence towards us, *p.* 25. To what purpoſe again does he Appeal to *Solomon*'s Prayer at the Dedication, imploring Temporal Mercies, and asking Deliverance from the Peſtilence, Famine, Mildew, Blaſting, Locuſt, Drought, Exile, *p.* 21. And to Dr. *Comber* about the Antient Liturgies, Praying for Temperate Air, Gentle Showers, Refreſhing Dews, and Plenty of all Fruits; and to our Liturgy, Praying that God would give and preſerve to our Uſe the Kindly Fruits of the Earth --. And that the King may ſtudy to preſerve his People in Wealth, Peace, and Godlineſs; with a long Story about the Land of *Canaan* flowing with Milk and Honey, *p.* 72. and tedious Quotations out of *Deuteronomy*, *Exodus*, and *Leviticus*, about being bleſs'd in the City, and bleſs'd in the Field, in the Basket, and in the Store, *&c.* I ſay to what manner of purpoſe is all this, and abundance more that I might Muſter up together of the ſame importance, but that I am weary of Repeating, what once ſaid is too much. For 'tis viſible to the Eye that can ſee any thing, that all this is quite off from the Point, vaſtly *Wide* of the Mark (whoever 'twas that *ſhew'd* him his *Ground*) and a pure *Ignoratio Elenchi*, ſuch as Learned Men uſe to be guilty of, that won't Think. Of which we have a late and freſh Inſtance in the very Noiſy Controverſy between F. *Malebranche* and M. *Arnauld*, Dr. of the *Sorbonne*, who with great Zeal and Earneſtneſs write Volum after Volum againſt the Other, and yet very ſeldom, if ever, Oppoſed his true Meaning.

Suppoſe I ſhould ſay after St. *Auſtin*, that the World is not to be *Enjoy'd*, taking the word (*Enjoy*) as he does, ſtrictly, as 'tis oppoſed to, and diſtinguiſh'd from *Uſing*, and a Zealous and Over-Orthodox Adverſary thinking to Contradict me, ſhould with great Paſſion Contend that we *may* enjoy the World, uſing the Term (*Enjoy*) in the large Popular Senſe, as it ſignifies the Having, Poſſeſſing, or uſing of a thing, and ſhould quote Scripture for it, *who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*, and ſhould alſo pretend that the Contrary is againſt the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, who Prays in her Liturgy, *That it may pleaſe thee to give and preſerve to our uſe the Kindly Fruits of the Earth,*

Earth, ſo as in due time we may enjoy them, would not this be mere Stuff, wretched Trifling, quite beſide the Matter, a perfect *Ignoratio Elenchi*, and as much to the Purpoſe as if he had ſaid juſt Nothing?

Now this is the very Caſe in hand. Dr. *Wh.* has taken a great deal of pains to prove that we may deſire to have Fire when we are Cold, Meat when we are Hungry, Drink when we are Thirſty, and other Accommodations of Life as we want them. And he has proved theſe things very Learnedly, and like a Sound Orthodox Divine. But I think he might have ſpared his Pains, for who oppoſes him in any of theſe things? I know of no Adverſary he has, or is like to have in any of theſe Momentous Points. For though I cannot allow the Loving of Creatures in the ſtrict and rigorous Senſe of the Word, meaning by it the Uniting our Souls to them as our True Goods or the Efficient Cauſes of our Happineſs (as not being able to Conceive that they can be ſo) yet 'tis plain enough that I allow the *Uſe* of them, and the Willing or Deſiring them for that Uſe, and therefore he might have ſpared, among other Impertinencies, that Abuſive Reflection, *p.* 5. *Now is it not ſtrange Doctrine to affirm as Certain, that we cannot truly love God if we deſire our daily Bread, and that we forſake God if we move towards Meat when hungry, or Drink when thirſty.* Strange Doctrine indeed, but whoſe 'tis I cannot at preſent recollect. This therefore I ſay might have been ſpared, as well as that Invidious Quotation from St. *Paul* who he ſays *Condemns thoſe Hereticks who taught Men* (as if I did ſo) *to abſtain from Meats, which God hath Created to be received with Thanksgiving*, &c. *p.* 8. 1 Tim. 4. 3. The Unkindneſs as well as Impertinence of which Inſinuation is Obvious enough both from the place it ſelf, where this is alſo call'd the Doctrine of Devils, and from his diſtinguiſhing the word (*Heretick*) by a different Character; and I need not aggravate it any further to ingage the Readers Notice, than by praying God to forgive him for it.

But to ſet him right in the Notion he pretends to oppoſe, but indeed does not underſtand, and ſo levels his Aim at another Mark, let him take this ſhort Account of it. 'Tis conſider'd here that we are Beings of a Compounded Nature, conſiſting of Body and Spirit, having our Place and Abode in a Material and Senſible World. 'Tis alſo ſuppoſed that neither the Body to which we are united, nor the Bodies which are without and about us, no part of the Material World can act upon our Spirits, which are ſubject to the Power of God only, whoſe Priviledge alone it is to act upon them. And that therefore we are not to unite our Souls to theſe external Objects, which cannot really and truly by way of Cauſal Efficiency act upon them, but to God, who both can and does. But yet however becauſe

Bodies

Bodies do make a real Impreſſion upon our Bodies, and by that (according to the Divine Eſtabliſhment) are alſo Occaſions of what is felt in our Souls, we may unite our Bodies to theſe external Objects, which tho' occaſional Cauſes with reſpect to our Souls, are yet real ones with reſpect to our Bodies, and therefore may be approached to and united with by our Bodily part, as the Natural Condition, Means, or Occaſion of that Pleaſure which God truly cauſes in our Spirits upon ſuch Impreſſions made in our Bodies: That is, in other words, we may Will the uſe of theſe things according to the Order of Nature, or rather the Law of its Author, but not unite our Souls to them, as not being our Beatifick Objects: or, as I otherwiſe expreſs it, ſeek or uſe them for our good, but not love them as our good; or, as in the Letters, approach them by a Movement of the Body, but not by a Movement of the Soul. Which Diſtinction is as clear as that of the Soul and Body it ſelf, and is not in the leaſt invalidated by what Dr. *Wh*-- has offered againſt it. For what tho' the Movements of the Body are not pure Mechanical Motions, but do alſo include a Movement of the Soul, (as he very truly obſerves, but not very pertinently objects, *p.* 122) yet 'tis to be conſider'd here what this Movement of the Soul is, or, what is its *Term.* And when we do ſo we ſhall find that all the Movement of the Soul here is only to will the Movement of the Body towards theſe things, and not that ſhe unites her ſelf to them, which comes to the ſame as that ſhe wills the uſe of them as *Occaſions*, but does not unite her ſelf to them as *Cauſes* of her Good, as was ſaid before. So that the Diſtinction remains firm and unſhaken.

In ſhort then, I allow the Loving of Creatures, as that ſignifies at large *the willing the uſe of them*, but I deny the Loving of Creatures, more ſtrictly ſpeaking, as meaning by it the uniting our Souls to them as our true Goods, or Beatifick Objects. Which will reſolve at laſt into that Maxim of St. *Auſtin*, *Utendum eſt hoc Mundo, non fruendum*, that the World is to be uſed not enjoy'd, only with a better Foundation for it than he has aſſign'd, *viz.* becauſe the Creatures are only Occaſions, not the true Cauſes of all that Good and Happineſs which accrues to us in the uſe of them. A Principle which I have elſewhere proved at large, and which my Learned Adverſaries have not thought fit (no doubt with due Prudence and Caution) ſo much as to meddle with, much leſs to Confute, tho' one of them thinks it might be done by ſome, if they would be at the Pains, and thought it worth their while. Now for my part I think it very well worth their *Pains* and their *while* too, and that ſo much, that I cannot but wonder that Men ſhould pretend to Confute a Moral Diſcourſe built upon

1 *Diſc. p.* 78.

upon Philoſophick Principles, and yet ſhould let the Foundation alone upon which it reſts, and more yet, that one of my Adverſaries ſhould in the Title Page of his Book (the only place where ſome Authors Confute thoſe they write againſt) pretend to anſwer all the Arguments, &c. and yet not meddle with the Philoſophical, which is the chief part of the Diſcourſe. But 'tis *New* Philoſophy, and that he does not care to trouble his Head with, but likes the Company of his Syſtematical Divines better, whoſe *Appretiative*, *Comparative* and *Intenſive*, (whatever my Thoughts may be of them in other reſpects) I no more *envy* him than he does me the *French Poets* and *Divines*.

But though our Learned Author thus ſtarts and boggles at New *Philoſophy*, yet he has the Courage to venture boldly and hardily upon New *Logick*, whereof he has given us a very pregnant Inſtance, and ſuch as is not to be parallel'd in the whole *Art of Thinking*. *Had Mr.* N. p. 96. ſays he, *when he ſaid there are but two ſorts of Love, that of Deſire and Benevolence, conſider'd that this Love of Deſire may be branched into Religious and Natural Deſires, Deſire of things Spiritual and Temporal, of things good for the Body and for the Soul, of things to be uſed here, and to be enjoyed here and hereafter, of things as neceſſary for our being and our well-being, of things to be deſired for their own and for Gods ſake, he would have diſcerned as great a difference betwixt one Love of Deſire and another, as betwixt Love of Deſire and of Benevolence.* As much as to ſay, had Mr. *N.* when he ſaid there were but two ſorts of Lines, Strait and Crooked, conſider that Crooked might be branched into a *Circle*, an *Ellipſis*, a *Parabola*, &c. he would have diſcern'd as great a difference between this Crooked and that Crooked, as between Crooked and Strait. Well ſaid Logician: What do things that differe *genere*, the Co-ordinate Members of a Diviſion, differ no more than things that differ only *Specie*? Do a Strait Line and a Crooked Line differ no more than a *Circle* and an *Ellipſis*? This 'tis to think *freely*, and to leave the Company of the *Syſtematical* Men. Not that I would inſinuate hereby that our Author does not underſtand Logick. On the contrary, I verily believe he does. But as the Beſt Men have their Failings, ſo the Wiſeſt have their Overſights and Blunders. And all the uſe I would make of this is only to adviſe him not to be too ſecure of his Underſtanding, which by this he may ſee is lyable to Confuſion and Miſtake as well as other Mens, and to look better to his hits the next time.

But to return, having thus ſtated and explained my Senſe, I leave it to the Rational part of the World to conſider whether my Learned Adverſaries have Confuted me, or ſo much as oppoſed me or no. In the mean time, I ſhall take the liberty to conclude that they have not, and accordingly ſhall not think my

ſelf

ſelf any further concern'd with them at preſent, than to grant them the main Concluſion they contend for, as being aliene from the Buſineſs, and utterly beſide the Point in Queſtion. I was inclining once to have made ſome Remarks upon the particular Arguments, together with other incidental Paſſages that run through the Bulk of their Diſcourſes, but a Kind and Ingenious Hand has ſaved me that Pains in relation to Mr. *L*-- and as to the other, I conſider that there needs only a particular Application of that general Ground I have laid, which may ſerve as a Key to unlock his Difficulties and Objections, which run upon a miſtaken Senſe of my Meaning, and Light with all their Weight (whenever they have any) upon a Propoſition that is not mine. And indeed I think I have taken the only proper Method to anſwer a Book that is written as his is. For when the whole runs upon a falſe Ground, to have taken him Piecemeals, Paragraph by Paragraph, and to have conſider'd every ſingle Objection diſtinctly, by ſhewing that ſuch a thing is true in this Senſe, which is not to the purpoſe, but not true in that Senſe which only is ſo, would have been a thing ſomewhat tedious and Troubleſome to me (who have neither *Time* nor *Health* to ſpare) and not very delightſome to my Reader, who alſo need not find the want of it, if taking the general Ground I have laid along with him, he makes a particular Application of it as he goes. Upon which Conſideration I ſhall concern my ſelf no further at this time: And let not any ſo far prejudge my Anſwer as to think it leſs Juſt and Perfect becauſe ſo ſhort; for as ſhort as it is, 'twill be found as long as the Objection, and if I do not anſwer more largely, 'tis becauſe my Adverſaries have not oppoſed me Pertinently; which is alſo the Reaſon why I did not Reply to Dr. *Wh--by*'s Private Papers. A Fencer that ſees his Adverſaries Paſs very wide of him, and running quite beſide him need not be very ſollicitous of his Defence, nor uſe a great deal of Guard, but when he finds him to ſtrike directly at him he is concern'd to ward off the blow as well as he can. And ſo ſhall I, and doubt not but by God's Aſſiſtance to be able to do it. And they may begin the Experiment aſſoon as they pleaſe.

In the mean time may the good Spirit of God ſhine forth upon all our Minds with his Heavenly Light, and aſſiſt our weak Underſtandings in the Study and Contemplation of all that Truth which it concerns us to know, and alſo by his Divine Grace ſo diſpoſe our Wills to all Charity and Brotherly Love, that whether we find and conſent in the Truth or no, we may yet continue well-affected to each other, and may ſtudy to preſerve the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, and in Righteouſneſs of Life. Which Things I value more highly, and am, I hope, more heartily concern'd for than for any *Hypotheſis* in the World. 17 JY 60 *FINIS.* *J. D.*

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